A

Family-Altar

Oliver Heywood

Erected to the Honour

Of the Eternal God:

OR,

A Solemn Essay to promote the Worship of God in Private Houses:

Being some Meditations on *Genesis* 35. 2, 3.

By *O.H.* an unworthy Minister of the Gospel.

Psalm 101. 2. *I will behave my self wisely in a perfect way: O when wilt thou come unto me! I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*

Psalm 118. 15. *The voice of Rejoycing and Salvation is in the Tabernacles of the Righteous.*

Si enim negligit Deus in hoc Saculo genus hominum, cur ad Cœlum quotidiè manus tendimus? cur orationibus crebris misericordiam Dei quærimus? cur ad Ecclesiasticas Domos currimus? cur ante Altaria supplicamus? nulla enim est nobis ratio precandi, si spes tollitur impetrandi: Salvian. Massil. de Gubernat. Dei, lib. 1.

LONDON,

Printed for *T. Parkhurst* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapside*. 1693.

To the Christian Reader, especially to Housholders professing Religion.

FOR your sakes (dear Friends) I presume again to appear upon the publick Stage, to be your faithful *Monitor*, to prompt you to your duty, and to promote the Work of God in your own Souls, and the Worship of God in your Families: And I know not how a Minister can imploy his Time, and Studies, and Pen better (next to the Conviction and Conversion of particular Souls) than pressing upon Housholders a care of the Souls under their charge: This hath a direct tendency to publick Reformation: Religion begins in Individuals, and passeth on to Relatives; and lesser Relatives make up greater. Churches and Common-wealths consist of Families. There is a general complaint of the great decay of the Power of Godliness, and Inundation of Prophaneness; and not without cause: I know no better Remedy than Domestick Piety: Did Governours teach their Inferiours by Counsels and Examples; did they severely discountenance and restrain Enormities, and press Holiness, and then call on God united-

ly and affectionately, that he would efficaciouſly work what they cannot effect; who can tell what a bleſſed alteration would follow? In vain do you complain of Magiſtrates and Miniſters, while you that are Houſholders are unfaithful to your Truſt: You complain, the World is naught; what do you to mend it? Do not ſo much complain of others, as of your ſelves; and complain not ſo much to Man as to God, and plead with him for Reformation and ſecond your Prayers with earneſt Endeavours: Sweep before your own doors: Act for God within your ſphear: As you have more opportunity of familiarity with Houſe-fellows, ſo you have more authority over them by their dependance on you, to influence them; and if you improve not this Talent, you will have a dreadful account to give, eſpecially when their blood will be required at your hands, becauſe their ſin will be charged on your neglect. Oh Sirs! have you not ſins enough of your own, but you muſt eſpouſe the guilt of your whole Families? It's you that make bad Times, and bring down Judgments on the Nation. Would you rather ſee your Children frying, and hear them crying in Hell Torments, than ſpeak a word to them for their inſtruction, hear them cry under your correction, or cry to God for their Salvation? Oh cruel Tygers, and barbarous Monſters! You may conceit your ſelves to be Chriſtians; but I cannot judge that Man worthy to be a fit Communicant

nicant at the Lord's Table, that maintains not the Worship of God ordinarily in his Family; and I think he deserves admonition and a censure for this sin of omission, as well as for the scandalous sins of commission; for he bewrays his horrid Hypocrisie in pretending to be a Saint abroad, but is a Brute at home: For a right-bred Christian is an Universalist, *having respect to all God's Commandments:* Such as are righteous before God, *walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless:* Let these then go amongst the Herd of prophane wretches, and fare as they do at the last, that make no conscience of Family or Relative Godliness: Such as will not pray now, will cry too late, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, when the door is shut; yea, they that now will not cry for a crum of mercy, shall in Hell cry out for a *drop of Water, to quench their flaming Tongues in those Eternal Torments:* To these wretched Hypocrites I recommend the serious considering of *Prov.* 1. 24.—31. *Job* 8. 13, 14. 15. 34. *ch.* 27. *v.* 8, 9, 10.

Psa. 119. 6. Luke 1. 6. Mat. 25. 11, 12. Luk. 16. 24.

I shall address my self to honest, well-meaning Housholders, who make conscience of serving God with their Families. You may look on this as your priviledge, as well as duty; I hope you do. *David* thought it a great mercy that he and his People had any thing to offer, and any hopes of entertainment: Oh what an honour is it that the King of Heaven gives you any admittance into his Presence-Chamber with your Fa-

1 Chron. 29. 9.—14.

milies twice a day! to confeſs your ſins, beg pardon, ſupplies of mercy; to give him the glory of his Goodneſs, to lay your Load on him, and get eaſe; I hope you will never be unwilling to it, or weary of it. God forbid you ſhould: You are not weary of Meal-times, if you be healthful; know and keep theſe appointed times of coming to God. If you promiſe to meet a Perſon of Quality at ſuch an hour, when the Clock ſtrikes, you ruſh up, crave pardon, and tell the company, one tarries for you, you muſt be gone: Oh make not more bold with God than you would do with Men; and keep your hearts continually in a frame for duty: Rambling in the day indiſpoſeth your ſpirits for duty at night.: So act, as to think you muſt go to an heart-ſearching God before you ſleep; and ſo pray, as if it were the laſt time you ſhould approach to God with your Family in this World: Study the frame of your hearts; be not content with lip-labour: Reſt not in the work done, without communion with God: Preſume not upon your own goodneſs, you that are the holieſt: Deſpair not becauſe of your wickedneſs, or guiltineſs, you that think your ſelves the worſt of men: Remember, *Manaſſeh* prayed, and God was intreated of him, when he humbled himſelf greatly. Be not diſcouraged becauſe you cannot do ſo well as others: *God deſpiſeth not the day of ſmall things:* God hath Babes in his Family, that chatter like a Crane or Swallow. A Child's liſping is underſtood

2 Chro 33. 12, 13.

Zech 4. 10.

Iſa. 38. 14.

derſtood by an indulgent Father: And if a diſtempered Child ſtoop down, and reach us up any ſmall thing, we take it kindly; ſo doth God when a ſick Soul falls low in Humility, and reacheth high in Heavenly-mindedneſs. You cannot be always actually on your knees, or ſpeaking with your tongues, but ſtill maintain a praying-frame of heart. Mr. *Greenham* ſaith, When one asks how your Family doth, let this put you in mind to pray for them; thank God for mercies; reflect on your ſelves, What have I done for their welfare? how are the Souls of my Children, Servants? and lift up an Ejaculation for them: Be much in Prayer: Give your ſelves to Prayer: Prayer is your Phyſick, your Armoury, Ammunition, your Antidote againſt Satan, World, Fleſh: This is your way of Trading with God for the richeſt Commodities for your ſelves and yours; the profit will be yours, the glory God's.

To help you in this work, I have writ this Treatiſe, not having ſeen any directly upon this ſo needful a Subject, and was requeſted to do ſomething this way; but after I had compleatly finiſhed this following Work there came to my hands a very Learned and Elaborate Diſcourſe of Mr. *Tho. Doolittle*'s on *Joſh.* 24. 15. driving this Nail home, which may ſeem to render this Eſſay needleſs; yet upon theſe conſiderations (if it be judged convenient) I am willing it ſhould receive impreſſion; 1. That Excel-

Supplement to Morning Exerciſe at *Cripplegate*, Printed 1676.

lent Diſcourſe full of Sinewy Arguments may be more ſuitable to Learned, this plain Treatiſe to Vulgar Capacities, being adapted to the common uſe of Countrey People. 2. Both matter and method are far different, as I perceive upon reading and comparing both. 3. That Diſcourſe is inſerted amongſt the Voluminous Books of Morning Lectures; this being a ſmall thing by it ſelf, is more attainable and portable. 4. Poſſibly this may fall into ſome hands, that the former hath not, and may be an Appendix and Supplement to that choice Piece, which I do earneſtly recommend to the Reader to purchaſe and peruſe; and if this my ſleader Attempt may provoke any to purchaſe that, and both together may but attain this great end of ſetting up Family-Worſhip in the power of it, I have my End, and ſhall follow all theſe Soul-helps with my earneſt Prayers, that the God of all Grace would pour into your Souls the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, make the Members of your Families conſcientious in joyning; and Governours and Governed Orthodox in Principles, ſincere in their Spirits, holy in their Practices, to the Glory of God, and good of his Church; which is the hearty deſire of thy Soul-friend,

Feb. 2. 169$\frac{2}{3}$. *Oliver Heywood.*

To

TO THE
READER

THIS *Discourse, and that other by Reverend Mr.* Newcome *on* Prov. 25. v. 28. *do very opportunely come out together, both in reference to one another, and to the Time we live in, and to that which should be aimed at in all Times, the reviving and keeping alive of serious, practical Religion, but most of all in this Time wherein it so much languishes.*

They that know the Reverend Author of this Work, or have perused (with desire to profit) those pious practical Treatises, which he hath formerly Published, will think (as we do) that there is no need of any Letters Commendatory to bespeak thy favourable acceptance of the following Discourse: The design of which is to perswade and engage those that are Heads and Governours of Families, to take up Joshua's *Resolution; that whatever others do, yet* they and their Houses will serve the Lord, *in daily faithful fervent Prayer, with Thanksgiving.*

It is a word in season: For 'tis a common Complaint, and that too, by many, who are not a little guilty of it themselves; That the Power of Godliness,

liness, the Life of Practical Religion, is at this day under a lamentable decay: And amongst the many Causes of this decay, there is scarcely any that hath been more perniciously influential thereunto, than the neglect of Family-Worship of God, which is one most proper means to promote Seriousness in Religion: Frequent solemn Addresses to God, having a tendency to keep God in remembrance, and to cause the Apprehensions of God to make the deeper impression, and to have the stronger influence upon the hearts of those who have not quite lost all sense of a God, or forgotten that they have Souls to save, or lose. Prayer also being a means of God's appointment, to obtain Family Blessings and Mercies, (as well as Personal and National,) according to the many Promises which God hath made of Audience and Acceptance of the Prayers that are put up unto him in the Name of Christ, with upright hearts. To those that sincerely love God, and have wisdom to judge of things as they relate to Eternity; the Duty commended in this Treatise, will appear, not only to be a necessary Duty, but a precious Priviledge, and gracious Vouchsafement: For there are two things which do especially render a Christians continuance in the World desirable and comfortable to him; the one is, that he may acquaint himself with God, and enjoy some sweet Communion with him, (which is a beginning and foretast of Heaven whilst we are here on Earth.) They that are utter strangers to this, have no cause to think, that they are as yet made meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in

Light.

Light. The other desirable End or Business of a Christians Life is, that he may be serviceable to God, by promoting his Glory and Interest in the World, especially by furthering the spiritual Good, and Salvation of Souls; both these do meet together in the conscientious practice of this Duty. First; Communion with God: When the Head and Master of a Family (who is as Prophet, Priest and Ruler in his Family) doth joyntly with his Children and Servants (as a little Church of God in his House) offer up daily Sacrifice of Prayer, Praise and Thanksgiving unto God, the Author of their Beings, the God of their Lives, and the giver of every good gift wherewith their Lives are sweetned: And does also receive from him Communications of Grace and Mercy; for our bountiful God will never be behind-hand with those that seek him in truth, but giveth liberally to them that ask in Faith.

Secondly; Serviceableness unto God, in training up his Family in the fear of God; God himself bearing witness how greatly acceptable Family-Religiousness is unto him, in that high Commendation, which he hath recorded of Abraham; I know him, (*saith God*) that he will command his Children, and his Houshold after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord. *'Tis a Duty that is both Work and Wages; a Service, that carries its Reward with it (Reward, not of Debt, but of Grace,) it brings a Blessing upon a Family, as the Ark did on the House of* Obed-Edom; *when on the contrary, dreadful* Wrath *is imprecated to be* poured out upon

upon the Families that call not on the Name of God, *Jer.* 10. 25.

Reader, if thou be one that liveſt in the daily exerciſe, and due performance of this Duty of Family-Prayer, thy own experience of the ſpiritual Benefits and Advantages of it, will enable thee to ſet to thy Seal to what the God of Truth hath ſpoken in his Word. I never ſaid to the Seed of *Jacob* (*Iſraelites indeed, that know how to wraſtle with God,*) ſeek ye my face in vain. *But if being a Maſter of a Family, thou be a ſtranger to this duty, either through ſlothfulneſs, multiplicity of buſineſs, or prejudice and diſaffection to the Duty; the Reverend Author hath ſaid enough to convince thee, that it is thy Duty; and if convinced hereof, thou wilt continue in the wilful neglect of thy known duty, thou doſt in effect ſay with thoſe in* Jer. 44. 16. As for the Word which thou haſt ſpoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee; *What an aggravation will this be of thy ſin!* For to him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is ſin, *Jam.* 4. 17. *i. e. exceeding ſinful; and alſo of thy puniſhment; for* that Servant which knew his Lords will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes, *Luk.* 12. 47. *That the one and the other may be prevented, and thou mayeſt be prevailed with conſcientiouſly to practiſe this Duty, is the deſign of this Treatiſe, and the hearty deſire of*

Thine in the Lord { *John Starkey.* / *John Howe.*

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A Family-Altar Erected to the Honour of the Eternal God.

Geneſis 35. 2, 3.

Then Jacob *ſaid unto his Houſhold, and to all that were with him; put away the ſtrange Gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your Garments:*

And let us ariſe and go up to Bethel, *and I will make there an Altar unto God, who anſwered me in the day of my diſtreſs, and was with me in the way which I went.*

Chap. I. *The Text opened. Doctrines raiſed.*

THis Text is copious, and may be called a Family-Text, as comprehending the whole Duty of Houſholders and their Inferiours: He that is not relatively Religious, is not really Religious: God hath to do with all Men in all their capacities: And Men have to do with God in all their Stations, Relations, Actions. As we muſt give an account to God of our natural, civil, and ſpiritual Acts: God's Word muſt regulate all we do, that we may act as Chriſtians, according to God's will, and for his glory. The Text contains an excellent pattern for all Families.

The whole Context holds forth these four Generals.

1. God's Commission to *Jacob*, *v.* 1.
2. *Jacob*'s Charge to his Family, *v.* 2, 3.
3. His Families chearful Compliance, *v.* 4.
4. The blessed Issue, *viz.* success, safety, *v.* 5. An hint of all these.

1. The Text declares God's Commission to *Jacob*; In which Commission observe four things.

Viz.
1. The Privacy of it; God said of *Jacob*, when alone:
2. The Order; 1. *Arise*, 2. *Go to* Bethel, 3. *Dwell there.*
3. The Duty to be done; *make there an Altar.*
4. The Reasons to inforce this Duty.
   1. God's appearing to him.
   2. His danger; fleeing from his Brother.

Doct. 1. *That most of God's manifestations to his People are personal, or when they are alone.*

Jacob was alone when he had the Vision of the Ladder, *Gen.* 28. 12. when God bids him return to the Land of his Fathers, *Gen.* 31. 3. *Jacob* was left alone when he wrestled with the Angel, *Gen.* 32. 24. Our Lord invites Souls to solitary recesses, where he whispers them in the Ear, speaks to their Heart, there usually is a reciprocal giving of Loves: It's good being alone with God. Happy Souls that can say with our dear Lord,

Hos. 2. 14. Song 7. 11, 12.

Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus.

John

Joh. 16. 32. Ye *shall leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.*

2. From the Order and Appointment; *Arise, go to* Bethel.

Doct. 2. *God alone is the fittest to dispose of Mens Habitations.*

Deut. 32. 8. *The most High divided to the Nations their Inheritance; when he separated the Sons of* Adam—The great God is the Author of all Topography and Geography; as well as Genealogy and Chronology, *Act.* 17. 26. *He hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the Earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their Habitations.* And as God is the Soveraign Disposer of all; so what he doth is in infinite Wisdom, as a General of an Army, ordering the Troops to their distinct Posts, with which all men must be contented.

Sicut in castris sua cuique Turmæ & Decuriæ distincta est statio ita in terra locatos esse homines, ut singuli populi suis finibus contenti sint; & in ipsis populis suum quisque domicilium incolat. Calv. in loc.

Qu. *But why doth God bid* Jacob *here go to* Bethel?

Ans. 1. To convince him of his absolute dependance upon God, and his duty of Resignation of himself and all he had to God's good pleasure.

2. To quiet *Jacob*'s spirit that was at this time full of fears, because of the late slaughter of the *Shechemites*, *chap.* 34. 30.

3. To secure him and his Family from danger, by carrying them to a safer place

Gen. 28. 11, 19. Eight *German* Miles, saith *Paræus in loc.* out of harms way; *Bethel* being thirty English Miles distant from *Schechem*, Southwards: God hath his *Pathmos* for his Servants in times of danger; his *Pella* for his hidden ones in an Universal Slaughter.

4. To put *Jacob* upon paying his Vows; for hitherto he had been slack in making good his promise made at *Bethel*, *chap.* 28. 22.

How God speaks of himself in the third person. See *Par. in loc.*

3. Here's the Duty God puts *Jacob* upon, which is to make there an Altar unto God; which he must do, partly to maintain and promote God's Worship; partly to strengthen his Faith against his present fears, from the gracious Experiments he had at *Bethel*, *Gen.* 31. 13.

Doct. 3. *God will be worshipped where ever his People inhabit.*

Mens shifting their Habitation must not divorce them from God and Religion: As God is every where present, so in every place Incense must be offered to his Name, *Mal.* 1. 11. Change of place must not lessen our Piety.

4. Here's the Reason to urge this Duty; 1. God's appearing to him there.

Doct. 4. *Former Appearances of God to his Children are* Memento's *of present Duty.*

Jacob had been nine years in the Country, and had not returned to *Bethel* to pay his Vows made there; whether, 1. That he waited for a fit opportunity, to do it solemnly with Tythes or Sacrifices: Or 2. Waited

for

for an admonition from God, and hoped for God's signifying his mind, since he wholly depended on the Divine Appointment: Or 3. Whether now his new straits put him in mind of his old straits, receits: Or 4. Whether this was *Jacob*'s sin to forget and neglect this duty; which is most likely, that rich *Jacob* forgets what poor *Jacob* had vowed.

Totus à Divino Nutu pendebat, nec dubitabat Dom. illi significaturum tempus. Vid. Poli Syn. in loc.

Doct. 5. *God hath a day and a way to rub up his Peoples memories to perform forgotten duties.*

God tells him there was a day he fled from *Esau* his Brother, and now lets him see the danger he is in of the *Canaanites*, that he may perform old duties before he expects new mercies: And indeed new straits revive old guilt, *Gen.* 42. 21.

Dr. *Lightfoot* on *Gen.* thinks God was angry with *Jacob* for distrusting his promise, and sending *Esau* 500 Cattle, which he had vowed the Tythes to the Lord of, therefore sought to kill him. Observat. on *Gen.* p. 16.

Thus much for the first General, God's Commission.

2. Here's *Jacob*'s Charge to his Family, *verse* 23. *Then* Jacob *said to his Houshold*—— Wherein *Jacob* as an Housholder acts the part

Of a { 1. Prophet. 2. Priest. 3. King.

1. He is as a Prophet, to instruct his Family in the mind of God; 2. Teaching them their duty; 3. His own purpose what he is resolved upon; And 4. Communicating to them his own Experience for Argument and Encouragement, *chap.* 2. 1. His Prayer. 2. God's Answer, in his deliverance, and direction, *verse* 3.

2. He acts herein as a Priest in his own house.

1. In making an Altar unto God.
2. In pouring a Drink-offering thereon, and pouring Oil thereon, *verse* 14.

3. He acts the part of a King or Supreme Governour over his own Family, which consists,

1. In the Command he lays on them,
1. To put away strange Gods; 2. To be clean; 3. To change their Garments.
2. In his actual exercises of Jurisdiction,
Viz.
1. Their compliance, *ver.* 4. They gave him the strange Gods, and Ear-rings.
2. His demolishing, or putting them out of their sight; he hid them.

Q. 1. *How came Idols to be in* Jacob's *Family?*

Ans. 1. Either those newly taken from the *Shechemites*, amongst other spoils, *chap.* 34. 29. which *Jacob*'s Sons might keep, not to worship, but for their precious matter, of Gold, Silver.

2. Or *Jacob*'s Gentile Servants kept these Images to worship, secretly unknown to *Jacob*.

3. Or they might be maintained, and used by *Leah*, or *Jacob*'s two Wives, or Concubines, *Bilhah*, and *Zilpah*, or *Deborah* Nurse to *Rebecca*; for Idolatry was but gradually purged out.

4. Why might not these Gods be the Images that his beloved *Rachel* stole? *chap.* 31. 19. They are called Teraphims or Images;

ges; *Laban* calls them his Gods, *v.* 30. They were made in the ſhape of men, whom the Heathen adored as ſubordinate Gods, to whom they committed the protection of their Houſes, with whom they conſulted about ſecret or future things; from whom they received deluſory and diabolical Anſwers: Theſe Idols *Laban* worſhipt together with the true God; which *Rachel* took as due to her for a Portion; or (it may be) to prevent her Fathers conſulting them, that they might not inform him, which way *Jacob* fled: But Charity bids us believe that *Rachel* ſtole theſe Idols, to confute his egregious folly in worſhipping Gods that might be ſtoln, or at leaſt, to take away an occaſion of her Fathers Idolatry.

Qu. 2. *Why did* Jacob *bury them, or hide them under an Oak, and not break them to pieces?*

Anſ. 1. The Greek Verſion addeth, [ἡ ἀπωλεσεν αὐτὰ ἕως τῆ σήμερον ἡμέρας] and aboliſhed them, even until this day: And this ſeems probable from parallel Inſtances, that he firſt melted them, then hid them. Exo 32. 2 Kin. 18

2. He did this privately, not known to his Family, ſo that they could not ſeek for them or find them: And they being now to depart thence, could not have the opportunity to enquire after them. *De non exiſtentibus & non apparentibus eadem eſt ratio.*

3. There is a peculiar reaſon, why he hid them in this place: Whether we take it for Terebinth, or Turpentine Tree, as the Greeks

translate it, [καὶ κατέκρυψεν αὐτὰ Ἰακὼβ ὑπὲρ τὴν τερέβενθον——] or an Oak, (as we read it,) for the Hebrew word אֵלֶה signifies either) (if we respect *verse* 8. we find *Deborah* was buried under an Oak, called *Allon-Bacuth*, the Oak of weeping, a fit Funeral of dead Idols; so was these.

Si radix spectetur sign. arborem exsecrabilem funestam quales apud Idolorum delubra plantari solent, & fortè hàc de causâ sub ea exsecrabilia Idola recondidit. Vid. Poli Crit. in loc.

4. Interpreters give us two Reasons why they buried these Idols under an Oak; 1. Because those Trees were generally abused to Idolatry, as *Isa.* 1. 29. therefore proper places for Interment of these Monuments of Idolatry. 2. This was the safest place, where they were likely to remain longest hid, because the Heathen had a great Veneration for Oaks, therefore would not cut them down, or dig them up. Besides; Criticks observe, that the root of this word signifies an execrable, doleful Tree; such as is wont to be planted by Idol-groves; thence he hid these execrable Idols, in that place.

Doct. 6. *It's fit all Monuments and occasions of Idolatry be put out of peoples sight.*

See *Exod.* 23. 13. *Deut.* 12. 2, 3. *Hos.* 2. 16, 17.

Doct. 7. *A resolute Reformation produceth safety and satisfaction.*

When *Jacob* had taken this course, the terrour of God was upon the Cities round about them, and they did not pursue after the Sons of *Jacob*, *v.* 5. they became still as a Stone: Yea, their desire to hurt them was restrained; or they were dispirited: Yea, God

God made them Friends to them: Oh wonderful work of Almighty God!

But all this is Excentrick to my main design; I shall not meddle with *Jacob*'s Prophetical, and Regal Office over his Family, but speak chiefly or only to his Priestly and Sacerdotal Office, signified here by his making an Altar unto God.

The famous *Usher* in his Annals on the third Age of the World, fol. 9. saith, *Jacob* was 91 years of Age when *Joseph* was born, consequently 77 years old when he began first to serve *Laban*; upon his return into *Canaan* he built an Altar, which he called *El-Elohe-Israel* [i. e. *The mighty God, the God of* Israel] *Gen.* 33. 20. which was the self-same place where *Abraham* heretofore had built his first Altar, *Gen.* 12. 6, 7. and where *Jacob*'s Well was, near to Mount *Gerisim*, *Joh.* 4. 5, 20. This was about the year of the World 2273. 1731. before the birth of Christ; he died at the Age of 147 years, 2315 years after the Creation: Having got both the Birth-right and Blessing from his Brother *Esau*; and so was Priest in the Family, till God settled the priviledge of Priesthood on the Tribe of *Levi*, instead of the first-born. He saith, this History of *Geneses* contains the Story of 2369 years space; he quotes *Servius Sulpicius*, affirming that in this Tract of time lived *Job*, a man embracing the Law of Nature, and the knowledge of the true God, *&c.* But this by the way.

The

The Altar which *Jacob* now was to build was at *Bethel*, formerly called *Luz*, *Gen.* 28. 19. Which he promiseth shall be Gods House, *vers*, 22. Where he will offer Prayers and Sacrifices to God, and where God promiseth and vouchsafeth his special presence; according to *Exod.* 20. 24. Whether *Jacob* repaired, the old Pillar, his *quondam* Pillow, *Ch.* 28. 18. which might be ruined by the injury of time, or demolished by Idolatrous neighbours: Or whether he erected a new one, more stable, durable and fashionable than time and his former low circumstances would then permit: Is not much material unto dispute: Though most probably the latter: However this Altar was a Monument of Gods mercy, and a token of his present gratitude: And the use and end of it was to offer Sacrifice; so saith the Text, *Gen.* 35. 14. He poured a Drink-offering thereon, and he poured Oyl thereon; these were to be joyned with a Sacrifice, *Exod.* 29. 40. Called Drink-offerings, *Numb.* 28. 14.

Concerning an Altar observe, the Scripture takes notice of a threefold Altar,

1. A Literal, or Typical Altar.
2. A Mystical.
3. A Metaphorical Altar.

1. The Literal, or Typical Altar was that either before the Law or under the Law, the first Altar we read of is that of *Noah*, *Gen.* 8. 20. yet those Sacrifices we read of, *Gen.* 4. presuppose an Altar. In the Mosaical

Mosaical Dispensation, there were two sorts of Altars; 1. The Altar of Burnt-offering; 2. Of Incense: The former in the Wilderness was built of Earth; and, saith Mr. *Weemse*, the Lord would have it so, because he would not have it permanent, to remain after they were gone out of the Wilderness: And he would not have it made of hewn Stone, to signifie, that mens Inventions do but pollute the Worship of God, *Exod.* 20. 24, 25. This is an Altar most holy, *Exod.* 40. 10. it signified the Death of Christ for satisfaction to Divine Justice. 2. There was the Altar of Incense, mentioned *Exod.* 30. 27. This is called the Golden Altar, *Exod.* 40. 26, 27. and it holds forth Christ's Intercession at God's right hand. The four Horns signifie the strength and efficacy of Christ's undertaking. None might go to the Golden Altar to offer Incense, but he who might go to the Brazen Altar to offer Sacrifice. So we have no Mediator of Intercession, but he that is the Mediator of our Redemption.

See Mr. *Weemse* Expos. of Cerem. Laws. Com. 2. p. 46.

2. A Mystical Altar; that's Jesus Christ only, *Heb.* 13. 10. *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the Tabernacle.* This is in opposition to the Mosaical. Our New-Testament Altar, Christ, affords to us our Soul-sustenance, safe Protection, Sanctification, Justification, Consolation, Eternal Salvation: We need no other: We have all in Christ. See *Isa.* 56. 7. *Rev.* 8. 3.

3. There's a Metaphorical Altar, figuratively

ratively ſo called: So Goſpel-Miniſtration is called an Altar, 1 *Cor.* 9. 13. *They which wait at the Altar are partakers with the Altar, i. e.* holy things, or things of the Temple in alluſion to the Old Teſtament Diſpenſation. So the Worſhip of God is called the Altar, *Matth.* 5. 23, 24. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, i. e.* to God in a religious action: Yea, the whole Goſpel-Worſhip is thus denominated, *Rev.* 11. 1. *Riſe, meaſure the Temple of God, and the Altar, and them that worſhip therein; i. e.* look that Goſpel-ſervice be regualar according to God's Word, cleanſed from Antichriſtian pollutions: This is propheſied, *Iſa.* 19. 19. *In that day ſhall there be an Altar to the Lord in the midſt of the Land of* Egypt—*i. e.* God's Worſhip ſhall be ſettled in all places in Goſpel-times, not a Levetical, but Evangelical Altar: Nothing is more common in Old and New Teſtament, than to ſpeak of Goſpel-worſhip in the phraſe of the Law.

The like may be ſaid of Sacrifices, ſpiritual Sacrifices in a Goſpel ſenſe; ſo offering up to God our ſelves, *Rom.* 12. 1. prayer and praiſe, *Heb.* 13. 15. Acts of Charity, *v.* 16. a broken heart, *Pſal.* 51. 17. Martyrdom, *Phil.* 2. 17.

As for a falſe Altar, conſtituted in the Romiſh Church, upon which they would offer Chriſt daily as a Sacrifice for quick and dead, Proteſtants renounce it, as a crucifying the Son of God again, and inconſiſtent with Scripture and Reaſon, *Heb.* 9. 25. nor yet that

that he ſhould offer himſelf often---*v.* 26. 28. *Chriſt was once offered to bear the ſins of many,* Heb. 10. 14. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* It cannot be denied that the Antients have called the Lord's Supper, an unbloody Sacrifice; the Table, an Altar; Miniſters, Prieſts; the whole action, an Oblation: but not in the ſenſe the Papiſts do, but by way of alluſion, as it is a Memorial of Chriſt's Sacrifice; or as ſpiritual prayers, praiſes, alms, are attended therewith; as our Divines have abundantly proved; and diſproved the propriety of ſpeech as applied to that Ordinance.

Well then, we renounce Popiſh Altar, Sacrifices, Prieſts, yet acknowledge in a ſpiritual ſenſe, that Chriſt by his Blood hath made all Believers Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father, *Rev.* 1. 6. And that we *are built up a ſpiritual Houſe, an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 *Pet.* 2. 5, 9.

Quid opus eſt Altari ubi nec ignis ardeat, nec victimæ cædantur. Pet. Martyr cont. Gard.

The words being thus opened, I ſhall raiſe this important

Doct. *That Governours of Families muſt as Prieſts erect Family-Altars for God's Worſhip.*

It well becomes Houſholders or Governours of Families, to ſet up and maintain Family-Altars for worſhiping of God, in and with the Members of their Families.

As holy *Jacob* the famous Patriarch was a Prophet to inſtruct his Family in the true Religion,

Religion, and a King to Govern them for God; so a Priest to set up an Altar, offer Sacrifices, and perform Religious Worship for and with his Family: Yea the poorest man that hath a Family is to be Prophet, Priest and King in his own House.

God commands *Jacob* to build an Altar at *Bethel*, *Jacob* resolves upon it, and gives all his Family orders how to behave themselves in managing this important affair; and when they did their duty, God secured them, they journeyed and passed on safely.

Let none say that this setting up an Altar by *Jacob* was but ordered upon this particular occasion of his paying his Vows formerly made at *Bethel*, and so doth not oblige us?

I Answer, 1. It's true this circumstance of the place, occasion, and this solemnity are personal and particular, but the duty is, general, moral and prepetual, as I shall prove it.

2. *Jacob* doubtless worshipt God with his Family in all places where he had come, as he took the fear of God with him in his heart, so he left not the external practice of Religion behind him: But set up Gods Worship which was equivalent to an Altar in all places where he came, as his Father *Isaac* and his Grand-father *Abraham* had done.

3. And may not we have the like occasion as he had to rear an Altar? Have we had no mercies from God? Do we lie under no Vows, or at least, Obligations to the Lord? And do not these presidents, and general rules bind us to the like practice, except

cept we have a particular command by a voice from Heaven, or in an extraordinary way? I shall evince the contrary.

4. Because *Jacob* was left alone, and wrestled with the Angel and prevailed upon an extraordinary occasion, *Gen* 32. 24 *i. e.* the fear he had of his Brother *Esau*: Shall we think that *Jacob* never prayed alone, but when he was in the like hazard? No, doubtless he was well acquainted with God, and much accustomed to this trade of conversing with God: So because we find God prompting him to this Family-work here, can this be thought to exclude his ordinary course of Family-doctrine? No certainly, It rather implies and includes this.

In prosecuting this Point I shall use this Method,

1. Open what I mean by Altars in Families.
2. Prove it to be Housholders Duty to set them up.
3. Answer Objections against this Practice.
4. Make some Deductions and Applications.

Chap. II. *Shewing what is meant by Family-Altars, and what's required of Housholders.*

BY Altar I mean (by a *Synechdoche*) all the Worship of God to be performed in Families: To an Altar in old time literally, and in Gospel-times Mystically, or Metaphorically;

phorically; there are four things requisite.

1. The Institution or Consecration; none can appoint an Altar to be Erected but God, *Exod.* 20. 24. *An Altar of Earth shalt thou make:* None hath Power to order Gods Worship but himself alone: Men may
Mat. 28. 20. not add or diminish at their pleasure: Ministers must teach, Christians must observe
Numb. 7. all things whatsoever our Lord command-
10. eth us: Men may Dedicate an Altar, It is God alone that properly Consecrates or Sanctifies it; yet men are said to Consecrate
2 Chron. themselves to the Lord, yea and other things
29. 31, 33. in a secondary way, and instrumentally: But as God appoints, so himself only doth Authoritatively, efficiently, actually, Consecrate Persons and things: Let us see we have a warrant from God for what we do in his Worship.

2. An Altar requires a Priest: Before *Moses* Law, the First-born of the Family was Priest to offer on the Altar; but afterwards Good took the Tribe of Levi instead of the First-born, in remembrance of the Lords smiting the First-born in *Egypt*, *Num.*
Num. 17. 9. 3. 12. 13. *Aaron* and his Family were the blossoming rod whom God had chose in a peculiar manner to Minister before him. But our Lord Jesus is our New Testament *Aaron*, yet above him, even after the Or-
Heb. 6. 20. der of *Melchizedeck*; an higher Order than that of *Aaron*: Upon whose account all Gods
Joh. 17. 17. Saints be Kings and Priests: For as Christs Divinity sanctified his Humanity, for our

Lord

Lord as God ſanctified himſelf as man; ſo he alſo ſanctifies all his Saints: *By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*; for this end, *that they may be an holy Prieſthood to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* Heb. 10. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

3. A Prieſt muſt needs have ſomething to offer upon this Altar. The Prieſts under the Law offered Bulls, Goats, and brute Beaſts: Chriſt offered himſelf as a Sacrifice for our ſins: Saints offer their Souls and Bodies as a Thank-offering to the Lord; their prayer and praiſes, as was hinted before: But the Holy Ghoſt adviſeth us to be more ready to hear, than to give the Sacrifice of fools, *Eccleſ.* 5. 1. or than fools to give Sacrifice, who vainly think to pleaſe God with variety and coſtlineſs of their Offerings. *Obedience is better than Sacrifice*; and *the Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*; therefore it becomes us all to look to our ſtate and ſtanding, and alſo to the manner of ſacrificing, as well as the matter ſacrificed. Heb. 8. 3, 4.

4. As to the Altar, there muſt be reſpect to the End and Deſign of this Altar; for the End either makes or marrs the Action: Now the Text ſaith, *I will make there an Altar unto God*; and God ſaith, *An Altar ſhalt thou make unto me*; not to Idols, not to ſin, or to themſelves, to pleaſe their own fancy, or for vain-glory: God threatens he will break down all ſuch Altars: For though every Family muſt have its proper Altar in their Exod. 20. 24. Hoſ. 8. 11. Hoſ. 10. 2.

peculiar relative capacities, yet they must only make use of the one Altar Christ Jesus for acceptance and worship God after the
Zech. 14. 9. pattern shewed in the Mount; that the Lord may be one and his name one, *i. e.* his worship uniform, the same in all places: Hence it was that when the two Tribes and an half had made an Altar, the other Tribes were offended, and prepared War against them; till they were assured it was not in opposition, but as a Testimonial of their relation to, and worshiping of the same God, therefore called it *Ed*, a witness: Read the story, *Jos.* 22. 10, 34. Every Family must Erect such an Altar, to be a witness that they serve the same God that is worshiped in publick Assemblies, and the Catholick Church in all times and places.

Only this Altar I am now treating of, is distinct from, 1. Publick. 2 Secret personal Altars.

1. It is not properly Publick, either National or Congregational, such as that which *David* Erected, 2 *Sam.* 24. 18. *Gad came to David and said, go up, rear an Altar unto the Lord:* This was for all *Israel* to make an Atonement, and this was the place where the Temple was to be built; whither all the Tribes were to go up to worship God: And this Family-Altar must not exclude the publick Ordinances: Upon which holy *Davids* heart was so set, that he envies the Sparow and
Psal. 8. 3. Swallow that built their Nests near Gods Altars, and is transported with an extasie

of

of holy joy at his approach to it: *Then will I go to the Altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy:* No, no, the more a Christian is conversant with God in his Family, the more will he prize and improve publick Ordinances: Yet this is a distinct Altar. Psal. 43. 4.

2. This is distinct from secret Acts of Worship or personal Altars, such as *Abraham* Erected. *Gen* 12. 7, 8. *The Lord appeared unto* Abraham—*And there he builded an Altar unto the Lord*—and in the next verse, *called upon the name of the Lord.* Howbeit some Expositors think this was a Family-Altar, which *Abraham* Erected, to keep his Family in the true Religon; and to separate himself and them from the Idolatrous Neighbourhood: If so it confirms my assertion for Family-Altars. But certainly that in *Gen.* 22. 9. was more personal: So was *Jacob's*, *Gen.* 28. 18.

This therefore that I am speaking of is a Family-Altar, an Emblem of Family Worship.

It's true sometimes a Family signifies a whole Nation, a Kingdom, *Amos* 3. 1. The whole Family which I brought up from the Land of *Egypt*: This is all the Hebrews, afterward divided into the two Families of of *Judah* and *Ephraim*, *Jer.* 33. 24. The Sons of *Adam* were all one Family, and after the confusion of Languages they were distributed into the several Regions of the World, and had their Names from the Head and Root of that Family from whence they sprung: This is not the notion of Family Deut. 32. 8. Jer. 8. 3.

here: But it is to be taken strictly for persons dwelling together in one house, *Lev.* 20. 5. *Then I will set my face against that man, and against his Family*: This is distinct from Kingdoms and Provinces: *Judg.* 1 25. *They let go the man and all his Family.* Esth. 9. 28. Where Family is distinguished from Province and City: And this is the most famous and ordinary use of the Word: And in the Text the restriction is to *Jacob* and his House: Lawers, Civilians, Divines thus use the word and say that [*Domus est naturæ consentanea Societas*] an House or Family is a Society most agreeable to Nature: In this house are such as are most ordinarily and familiarly conversant together that Work, Eat, Drink, Sleep under one Roof: To a compleat Family (say they) is requisite, 1. A [*Paterfamilias.* 2. *Materfamilias.* 3. *Filius.* 4. *Servus.*] Father, Mother, Son, Servant: But indeed the proper constitutive essential parts of a Family are but

these two { 1. *Pars Imperans.* 2. *Pars Subdita.*

i. e. { 1. The Governing 2. The Governed parts:

And ordinarily the Governing part must set up this Altar, and Order the worship of God in his House or Family together with the rest: Hear what a great Divine (*now with God*) saith in this point Mr. *Baxters Christian Directory*, Tom. 2. Fol. 490. "Note "therefore that the Governour is an Essen- "tial part of the Family, and so are some of

"the

" the Governed (*viz.* that ſuch there be) " but not each member ; If therefore twen- " ty Children or Servants ſhall Worſhip " God without their Father or Maſter of the " Family, either preſent himſelf, or in ſome " repreſentative, it is not a Family-Worſhip " in a ſtrict ſenſe : But if the Head of the " Family in Himſelf, (or Delegate, or Re- " preſentative) be preſent with any of his " Children or Servants, though all the reſt " be abſent, it is yet a Family-duty, though " the Family be incompleat and maimed, " (and ſo is the duty therefore, if culpably " ſo performed ;) thus far that Reverend Man of God.

If it be inquired, how muſt an Houſholder act the part of a Prieſt in his Family ? what muſt he do ? Anſwer ; The office and buſineſs of a Prieſt in the Old Teſtament conſiſted in theſe four things chiefly.

1. To inſtruct the People in the Principles of Religion, and their duty to God and each other ; *Mal.* 2. 7. *The Prieſts lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the Law at his mouth :* Therefore God rejected thoſe Prieſts that rejected knowledge ; *Hoſ.* 4. 6. This is the work of Houſholders, *Deut.* 6. 6, 7. *Thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy Children.*

2. To manage the holy Offerings and Sacrifices for the Atonement on the behalf of the Children of *Iſrael*, *Lev.* 16. 11. *Aaron* Lev. 1. 5, 8 muſt make an Atonement for himſelf, and for his houſe—And *verſe* 21. Aaron *ſhall lay both his hands upon the head of the live Goat,*

and confeſs over him all the iniquities of the Children of Iſrael: Thus did *Job, ch.* 1.5. He roſe early in the morning and offered burnt-Offerings according to the number of them all; for *Job* ſaid, *It may be that my Sons have ſinned*—Thus muſt we do, confeſs the ſins of our Family, and beg pardon through Chriſt.

3. The Prieſt was to intercede for the People, as *Aaron* was to take a Cenſer, and put fire thereon from the Altar, and put on Incenſe—and ſtood between the dead and living, *Numb.* 16. 46, 48. Hence the Prieſts Office was to burn Incenſe in the Temple, and the multitude of the People were praying without, at the time of Incenſe, *Luk.* 1. 9, 10. For as often as the Prieſt entred into the holy place, he appeared as in the preſence of God, that he might be a Mediator between God and the People. It's true, there is no Mediator of Interceſſion, no more than of Redemption betwixt God and Sinners, but Jeſus Chriſt alone in a proper ſenſe; yet as one may pray and prevail for another through Chriſt, ſo a godly Houſholder may and muſt be the mouth of his Family on their behalf.

Nam quotiès in Sanctum ingrediebatur Sacerdos, quaſi in Dei conſpectum prodibat, ut inter tum & populum eſſet Mediator. Calv. in loc.

4. The Prieſt was to bleſs the People, *Numb.* 6. 23. *Speak unto* Aaron, *and to his Sons, ſaying, on this wiſe ye ſhall bleſs the Children of* Iſrael, *ſaying unto them, the Lord bleſs thee, and keep thee*, &c. Doubtleſs this was petitory, or by way of petition, and God anſwers that prayer, *verſe* 27. *And I will bleſs them.* But how far they did this in the Name, and

and by the Authority of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I cannot say, *Weemse* tells us, that the Priests lifted up both their hands when they blessed the People. The Text in *Psal.* 134. 2. [*Lift up your hands in the Sanctuary*] alludes to this, because the Priests could not lay their hands upon all the People, they lifted them up; for in blessing they were wont to lay on their hands; therefore *Jacob* laid his hands on *Joseph*'s Sons: There was a Sacerdotal, a Patriarchal, and a Parental Blessing. Thus the Chief of a Family blesseth his Houshold, 2 *Sam.* 6. 20. *Then* David *returned to bless his Houshold*; which was by prayer, and in the Name of the Lord, pronouncing a Blessing upon his Family; not as a Priest, nor as a Prophet only, but as a Governour of his Houshold, which the meanest Housholder may, and must do.

Weemse Christian Syn. p. 311.

Gen. 48. 17.

Chap. III. *Arguments to prove that Governours of Families must set up Altars for the Worship of God.*

THE second Head proposed is, the proof of this Doctrine, *That Housholders must Erect Altars for the Worship of God in their Families.*

1. The Command of God: Prayer is the great duty required of all men: The Text saith, pray without ceasing, 1 *Thes.* 5. 17.

So *Mephi-bisheth* e[illegible] bread a[illegible] *David*'s Table continually, *i. e.* at meal-times, 2 *Sam.* 9. 7. So in d[illegible] season is expounded, continually, *Numb.* 28. 2, 3.

This is not to be understood as the Euchites or Messalians of old did, as excluding other Duties, but either maintaining a praying disposition; or improving all seasons of Prayer: Using a constant course of praying: Customary praying is one thing, and a custom of praying is another; this latter is a Duty:

1 Pet. 4. 7. Col. 4. 2. Therefore we are bid to watch unto Prayer, as well as watch in Prayer: *i. e.* be sure you observe the hours and season of Prayer, in Closet, Family, Publick; be not absent; be not negligent: Then for the place, 1 *Tim* 2. 8. *I will that men Pray every where:* If in all places then in their Houses, and with their Families in conjuction: For it means our common dwellings, as well, as Temples; since there is no promise perculiarly appropriated to one place,

Joh. 4. 21. Mal. 1. 11. more than another, under the Gospel: For so was the Prediction; *In every place Incense shall be offered to my name:* Then for the sorts of Prayer, read *Eph. 6.* 18 *Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit*: i. e. Mental, Vocal Prayer; Petition for good, Deprecation of evil, Intercession for others, Thanksgiving for mercies; In the Publick Assemblies, in Private Houses, in secret Closets: Certainly these kinds of Prayers are necessarily included: And by good Consequence inferred: Let none say, this is far fetched, for Scripture-consequence

at. 22. 25, 32. is good Argument: As our Saviour proves the Resurrection. If Prayer at all times, in all places, of all sorts, be a Duty; sure

ly

ly Family-Prayer is a Duty, for it will come under all these.

2. Scripture-types prove Family Worship, as the Passover was celebrated in private Houses, *Exod.* 12. 3—*They shall take to them every man a Lamb—A Lamb for an House*: i. e. an Houshold, *ver.* 4 For the Hebrews say there must be ten, if one Family was not sufficient, they must call in the members of another Family; for it must all be eaten at once: The Passover was a token of the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and and saving their first-born, when the first-born of *Egypt* were destroyed: The Master of the Family took Bread, brake it, hence was called [*Borzeang*] a breaker: Then he Blessed it, saying, blessed art thou O Lord God, King of the World, who bringest Bread out of the Earth: Then gives to every one about the quantity of an Olive, to some the bigness of an Egg: This, saith *Weemse*, was at their common Supper with which the Passover was joyned: and doubtless Religion must always attend our Civils: This holds forth Family-Devotion: Let none say this were their Sacrament; for though it was, yet it was a Family-Religion; and though it typified the Lord Jesus, answered by the Lord's Supper in the New Testament, which is a Church-Ordinance; yet it also held forth God's Worship in Families: But a clearer type is the Morning and Evening Sacrifice; one Lamb is to be offered in the Morning, the other in the Evening; this must

Weems Christian Syn. p. 13 b. Whether there was two Suppers or no. See *Godwin, Moses & Aaron, lib 3. cap. 4. p. 137.*

must be day by day continually, *Exod.* 29. 38, 39. This was for every individual Family and Person, and it must be every day, not only on Sabbath-days and other Solemnities; but it shews that God must be daily worshipt: Yea, it must be Morning and Evening, that prayer and praise may be the Lock and Key of the day. And *David* alludes to this saying, *My voice shalt thou hear in the Morning; and let my prayer be set before thee as Incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the Evening Sacrifice.* This was constantly managed, but solemnly; yet we do not find that the whole Assembly met every day, therefore most probably a Family work, and worship.

Psal. 5. 3.
Psal. 141. 2.

3. Natural Religion prompts to it: There is certainly such a thing as the Law and Light of Nature, which puts men on to what is morally good, and restrains men from, or checks them for what is grosly evil: Hence the Apostle saith, *The Gentiles do by Nature some things materially good, and natural Conscience accuseth or excuseth:* So he appealeth to Nature, as an Argument *à Fortiori: Doth not even Nature it self teach you?* Whence these [κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι] common workings proceed, I dispute not, whether from some Relicks of Gods Image in Man, (which some censure as *Pelagianism*) or they be superinduced by God since the fall for the benefit of mankind: But doubtless such notions there are, as that there is a God, a Supreme Being; that he is to be feared, loved,

Rom. 2, 14, 15.
1 Cor. 11. 14
See Mr. Gerard of Temptation.

loved, worshiped: And that not only Singly, but Socially, in Families as well as alone, or in greater Assemblies: hence besides their National, and City-Gods, they had their [*Lares* and *Penates*] their Houshold Gods, tho' alas they were but Dumb Idols: From them it may be Idolatrous *Micah had an House of Gods*: And shall poor dim-sighted Heathens think it highly rational to have Dung hill Gods in their houses; and shall not men professing the true Religion of the true God, own their Omnipresent God, by setting up an Altar to him in their houses? the Prophet speaks peremptorily, *Mic.* 4. 5. *All People will walk every one in the name of his God, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God, for ever and ever.* Is there not much more reason? and should not such as own the true God run parallel to these poor Idolaters in Acting for, and Worshiping of the true God? Shall Nature teach them to have more care of their Children than Christians in Gods way? Yea shall even the Sea Monsters, draw out their Breasts and give Suck to their young ones? And shall Christians be so cruel to the Souls of theirs as to neglect this Houshold Duty. Judg. 17. 5. Lam. 4. 3.

4. The Prophecies and Promises of the Word imply this Family-Worship, *Jer.* 31. 1. *At the same time, saith the Lord, will I be the God of all the Families of* Israel, *and they shall be my People*: Whether this mean all the twelve Tribes or *Judah* only; it's a Gospel-Promise, and implies Worship: For relation

to,

Mat. 4. 10. *Putatis nos occultare quod colimus, si delubra & aras non habemus —— cum sit litabilis hostia bonus animus & pura mens, ut fœtera conscientia — hæc nostra Sacrificia, sic Dei sacra sunt; sic apud nos Religiosissimus est ille, qui optimus: Minucius felicis Octavius.*

to God infers Adoration of him: *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God*; and this in Families, not only larger, but lesser. Holiness to the Lord is not only to be written on the Bells of the Horses, but the Pots in the Lord's house shall be like the Bowls before the Altar; *i. e.* their very Kitchin-stuff, and common Utensils shall be reckoned as holy as Altar-vessels immediately imployed in Sacrifices: Yea further, every Pot in *Jerusalem*, and in *Judah* shall be *Holiness to the Lord of Hosts, Zech.* 14. 20, 21. The Persons and Utensils in private shall all be dedicated to God, and accepted by him in Gospel-times: Civilities shall savour of Sanctity: These New-Testament Priests shall without scruple, serve God in their houses: Every Family shall be a Temple, wherein God will be worshipped: House-pots shall be holy Vessels. This is meant of Gentile Worshippers, *verse* 16. And Jews shall not be behind them, *Zech.* 12. 12, 13, 14. *The Land shall mourn, every Family apart*, Heb. Families, Families, Royal Family, Sacerdotal Tribe, and common People; they shall mourn apart, and shut up themselves apart from company and pleasures to exercise godly sorrow, vent their spirits in repenting prayers, and mournful groans for their barbarous Crucifying the Prince of Life: This some from all places did at *Jerusalem*, *Act.* 2. and more shall do it the day of their general Call and Conversion to God.

5. The Servants of God have Practised

it:

it: You can ſcaace name a Religious Houſholder, but he hath ſet up an Altar in his Family, and offered Spiritual Sacrifices thereupon. *Joſhua* a Noble Warriour reſolves upon this, *chap.* 24. 15. *But as for me, and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord*; let others do as they dare anſwer it another day, I with my Children and Servants muſt and will worſhip the Lord: Worſhipping God is ſerving him, *Pſal.* 72. 11. *All Kings ſhall fall down before him; all Nations ſhall ſerve him*; *i. e. by* calling on God in prayer: Doubtleſs *Joſhua* did this. *David* a great King, in the midſt of Political and Eccleſiaſtical Imployments withdraws himſelf from all, and returned to bleſs his Houſe, 2 *Sam.* 6. 20. which could be no other way but by prayer, and praiſing God for and with his Family: Publick occaſions muſt not juſtle out this Family-worſhip. *Job*—roſe up early in the Morning, offered Burnt-Offerings, ſanctified the Members of his Family, and (leſt it be thought that this was but occaſional and accidental) the Text ſaith, *Thus did* Job *continually*, *chap.* 1. 5. And good Expoſitors think, *Daniel*'s going into his Houſe, and his Windows being open in his Chamber, (or Dining room, his uſual Oratory) he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed; this they judge to be Family-prayer, being ſo obvious and diſcernable by his Adverſaries. However, that devout Captain *Cornelius*, that feared God with all his houſe, prayed to God with his Family, *Act.* 10. 2. which he explains, ſaying,

Zeph. 3. 9.

1 Chron. 16. 43.

Dan. 6. 10.

saying, *I prayed in my house, verse* 30. *Calvin* notes, 'That *Cornelius* instructs his Family in 'the fear of God, contemning the fear of 'danger; for, the Jewish Religion was then 'hateful; nor might a Roman espouse a 'strange Religion; wherefore, although the 'sincere Profession of the Gospel is much 'decayed in the World, yet that fearfulness 'is too criminal, if upon the account of that 'unjust hatred, any one should not dare to 'dedicate or offer up his Family as a Sacri-'fice to God, by a holy Institution: Thus *Calvin.*

Nec omittenda est circumstantia quod familiam in Dei timore instituit contempto periculi metu, quod inde instabat; valde enim exosa erat Judaica Religio; nec impune erat Cœci Romani, peregrinam, ut vocabant, Religionem suscipere. Quare etsi hodiè, pessimè in mundo audit sincera Evangelii professio, tamen nimis vitiosa est timiditas, si quem impedit injustum istud odium, ne suam familiam Deo audeat in Sacrificium suâ piâ Institutione offere. Vid. Calv. in Act. 10. 2.

6. Argument for Family-Altar, is, the Providence of God calls for it: *God setteth the solitary in Families*, Psal. 68. 6. There is certainly a signal act of Divine care in disposing Men and Womens Affections to each other; to make a barren Woman to keep house, to be a joyful Mother of Children: It was God that made the God-fearing Midwives houses: The Lord made *Rachel* and *Leah* to build the House of *Israel*: And why doth God make his *David*'s a sure house? Why doth God give Servants? Is it only to gratifie the flesh, or a fancy? Is it only for Worldly profit? Is it not for Religion sake? Hath God no higher ends than most men have for Worldly advantages or pleasure? Surely

Psal. 112. 9.
Exod. 1. 21.
Ruth 4. 11.
2 Sam 7. 11.

Surely God puts persons into this Relation for himself: Who is the grand End of all his Acts? He hath made all things for himself: Should men then live like Heathens & Beasts? Do they not thereby contradict Gods design? Doth God give Wife and Children to them that fear him, and doth he not expect they should fear and serve him together? If Children be Gods Heritage, why should not we present them to the Lord upon our knees? If they be Gods reward to us, why should we not give them again to God as our best reward? If Families are Societies of Divine Institution, do they not need Divine Benediction? Should not Persons carry on Religion in a Relative capacity? Surely yes: When God Sanctifies this Relation by his appointment, should not men Sanctifie his name by setting up his Ordinances? there's great reason for it: For every thing is Sanctified by the Will of God and Prayer: Gods Will to warrant our lawful use thereof, Prayer for our holy and profitable use thereof. As men without both these cross Gods design, so they have no due use of this sweet Domestical Constitution and Relation.

Prov. 16.4. Ps. 128.3,4. Psal. 127.3. 1 Tim. 4.5.

7. This Family-Altar distinguisheth betwixt Godly and Prophane-Families: This is one discriminating Character, the one calls on God, the other not: This is as the Altar *Ed*, to testifie to all the World their solemn owning of the true God: On the contrary, wicked Persons are thus described, *Deut.* 29. 18. *Lest there should be amongst you, Man*

or

or Woman, or Family or Tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God: Mind it, Families, in their Domestical capacity, as well as in a Personal, or National capacity may be alienated from God, and may have a root that beareth Gall and Wormwood, then see what follows: This is that Jer. 8. 3. which makes evil Families, when instead of Praying, Reading Scriptures, Singing Psalms, there is Cursing, Swearing, Mocking at serious Godliness, Vain or Prophane Talk, at least but Worldly Discourse: But Religious Families are such as maintain Gods Worship according to Gods Institution, where the daily perfume of Prayer ascends Heavenwards: Mr. *Fenner* Preaching at the Funeral of a godly old man disabled from work, and and daily going among his friends for relief, saith, *Oh how much better was that poor Cottage where he lived, whence the Incense of Prayer and Praises mounted daily upwards; than the Sumptuous Pallaces of Princes and Nobles, where Oaths and Blasphemies are belched out!* It was the appointment among the *Jews* and Proselites, that every Family, Province, City, Esth. 9. 27. 28. should observe the Feast of *Purim*, as a memorial of their deliverance from *Hamans* Conspiracy, and is there not as much reason that Christian Families should celebrate the great work of Redemption in their Families? *Justin Martyr* tells us amongst the other Characters of Primitive Christians this Just. Mart. Apol. Christ. ad Ant. Pium. was one [*Quod jejuni prius Orant*] that they prayed fasting, before they set upon any work

Work: And having deſcribed the godly manners of Antient Chriſtians, he adds, that thoſe that live not as Chriſt taught, it is a certain note, that they are not Chriſtians, though they profeſs it in ſpeech, and words.

At enim qui non ita vivere comperiuntur ſicut ille docuit, certum eſt Documentum non eſſe Chriſtianos, quamvis id linguâ profitentur.

8. Chriſtian-families are Churches, and Churches muſt have Altar's for God's Worſhip. *Luke* gives us an account of the Primitive Church, that *they continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine, and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer*, *Act.* 2. 42. Breaking Bread in the Lord's Supper is a publick Church-Ordinance, the other are alſo common to Families, as well as Chriſtian-Aſſemblies. Families conſiſt of individual Perſons, Congregations of Families, and the Catholick Church of particular Societies; and Families may partake of the Name, and muſt of the Nature of Churches. What is a Church but a Religious Society gathered for God's Worſhip? The Church was limited to Families in the firſt Ages of the World; thence it ſpread it ſelf by Divine Grace into many ſtreams (all proceeding from one ſpring as branches from one root) till the Church became National. But Families were the firſt Original: Nor doth Family-Religion ceaſe when Publick Aſſemblies are erected, *Gen.* 4. 26. *Then began men to call upon the Name of the Lord.* That Text hath

Iſta enim Congregationes ſunt quaſi partes ſimilares Eccleſiæ Catholicæ, atque adeo, & nomen & naturam ejus participant. Ames Med. Theo. lib. 1. c. 32.

Diu me torſit hic locus, & etiamnum torquet. Vid. Pol. Crit. in locum.

tortured Interpreter; but this is clear, that calling on God's Name is part of God's Worſhip; that this Piety was maintained in *Seth*'s particular family; and poſſibly, in a little time men begun more publickly to own
Gen. 6. 2. God's Worſhip when others did degenerate; and hence the Sons of God and of Men were thereby diſtinguiſhed; which confirms the former Argument. But this is that I now ſay, that families are to be as Churches.
Col 4. 15. And ſome interpret thoſe places, *Rom.* 16. 5.
Philem. 2. *Greet the Church in their houſe*, and Church in thine houſe, to be no more than a private family. *Grotius* takes it for a domeſtical Church, and ſaith, [*ubi tres, licet Laici, ibi Eccleſia eſt*] that three perſons, though Laymen, make a Church: Now where there is God's Houſe, it is an Houſe of Prayer. That's no Church where there is no Altar to God, but it is a Synagogue of Satan. We cannot call every family a Church, but a Chriſtian godly family; and 'tis ſo called by the Analogy or Reſemblance it bears to a Church, from the Worſhip of God maintained therein. So then, without God's Worſhip in your houſes, you are not Churches, and ſo not Members of Chriſt, or of the Catholick Church of God; but in that reſpect, as Heathens.

9. Houſholders have a charge upon their hands, which they muſt give an account of, and opportunity to diſcharge this Truſt. Governours are charged with their families: Hence is the fourth Commandment given

to

to them chiefly, that they ſhould take care that their family ſhould keep the Sabbath-day; and hence is the fifth Command given to Inferiours to obey their Governours: Yea therefore are Parents rewarded or puniſhed in their Children, according to the ſecond Commandment; becauſe Governours muſt account for their Inferiours: Yea God orders Houſholders to bring all under their roof to the feaſt of Weeks, with their Free-will Offerings, *Deut.* 16. 10, 11. and the feaſt of Tabernacles, *v* 13, 14. Yea they were to bring their Males yearly, three times in the year, *v.* 16. And it is not for nothing that Houſholders have this charge laid on them, becauſe they have greater Authority, opportunity to bring them together for God's Publick Worſhip in the family; for they may call them together upon natural and civil accounts, to eat, and to work, and why not to pray together? their command is a Law. A Maſter may ſay, *Give an account of thy Stewardſhip*, and why not of ſuch a Sermon? They may demand an account of their time and talents committed to their truſt, and why not a Reaſon of their hope, and an account of their piety or proficiency? why not call them to prayer? And indeed it is a debt due to mens Children and Servants. This is implied in *Col.* 4. 1, 2. *Maſters give unto your Servants that which is juſt and equal*—preſently he adds, *continue in prayer*; intimating that praying for, and with Servants, is juſt and equal both upon their own

Exod. 20. ...12

Luk. 16. 2

and Servants account; it's as due as their promiſed wages: God makes Maſters as truly Watch-men as Miniſters, and if they
Ezek. 3. 18. fail, God will require their blood at their hand: Beſides the advantages and conveniency of frequent intercourſe capacitates Governours for this ſolemn Exerciſe; and God will require accounts of all theſe Talents another day.

10. There are daily caſes, occaſions, neceſſities that concern families, to be preſented unto the Lord: There are family-ſins to be confeſſed, wants to be bewailed, mercies to be deſired, cares, and croſſes to be removed, fears to be prevented, temptations to be reſiſted, duties to be performed, graces to be exerciſed, obtained, peace to be maintained, or regained, paſſions to be ſuppreſſed, mercies to be acknowledged; and all theſe muſt be laid at God's foot in daily prayer. That's a rare family that hath not ſome Prodigal Son, or Carnal Soul, as a Member of it; ſome body ſick in it, or ſome Child to diſpoſe of in Marriage or Calling; ſome doubts or difficulties that call for prayer, wherein the whole family is concerned; or if there be no ſuch exigency at preſent, yet who knows how ſoon any of theſe, or all theſe may light upon a family? And what remedy is there like family-prayer? *Phil.* 4. 6. *Be careful in nothing, but in every thing by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, let your requeſts be made known unto God.* This is a Catholicon, a Cure for all Diſeaſes, a Salve for every

every Sore. We find that when God afflicted *Abimelech*'s family, *Abraham* prayed unto God, and God healed him, his Wife, Maid-servants, and they bare Children. A *Pharaoh* will beg *Moses* prayers for him in his Affliction; and oh what a woful state is that family in, that hath no body to speak a word to God for it, and with it, in domestick troubles! A Child lies groaning, and the Father cannot groan out a prayer; a Servant lying at the point of death; and the Master hath no skill or will to bring him to Jesus for cure. Alas! that any should be so insensible of their wants, so ignorant of the means of relief, or distrustful of the Power of God, or efficacy of prayer: No family is above wants, therefore none should be without prayer; for prayer riseth from sense of wants, which no person or family is without, in whole or in part, in it self, or in sense, in act or continued duration of mercy.

Gen. 20. 17, 18. Exod. 9. 28.

Deest semper quod petitur vel ex toto vel ex parte vel in sese, vel in sensu nostro, vel denique quoad actum, vel quod continuatam ejus durationem. Ames Med. Theol. l. 2. cap. 9.

11. The Blessing of God usually attends Family-Altars: Not as though God were tyed to Religious Families, as Heathens chained their Idols, or as *Elies* Sons fancied Gods presence necessarily attending the Ark; but God usually visits pious Families: Scripture and Experience testifie this, *He will bless the house of* Israel, *he will bless the house of* Aaron; *he will bless them that fear the Lord both small and great*, i. e. Proselites, Gentiles, Converts: *The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the Tabernacles of the righteous:* Our Lord loves to converse, where his Children

Psal. 115. 12, 13. Psal. 118. 15.

 inhabit;

inhabit; it's true, he prefers publick Assem-
Psal. 87. 2. blies; *The Lord loveth the Gates of* Zion, *more than all the Dwellings of* Jacob: God loves to see his Children together in his H. Worship: The greater the Solemnity, if good, the more of Gods Spirit and Presence: But God doth not despise his Children seeking him in
Psal. 101. families; when devout *David* sings of mercy
1, 2. and judgment to God, and behaves himself wisely in a perfect way, he cries out; *O when wilt thou come unto me?* Gods kind visits are worth a World, whether by way of Providence, Assistance, Influence or Evidence: How often have Gods Children met with
Gen. 18. 10. God in their families? *Abraham* had a Pro-
Act. 10. 3. mise of a Child, *Cornelius* had a glorious Vi-
Luk. 8. 43, sion of an Holy Angel; and our Lord came
51. to *Jairus*'s house, to raise his dead Daughter: How often hath God answered Family-Prayer? Even at present by melting the hearts of Children, Servants! And afterwards: It's recorded of Mr. *Banen* of *Stepleford*, That he seldom performed Family-duty, but he had some Answers of Prayer to bless God for, since the former time of ap-
Anno autem pearing there before God. It is a remarkable
1584. *terræ motu Mons quidam in Ditione Bernatum ultra alias Montes violenter latus pagum quendam nonaginta familias habentem contexit totum, dimidiâ domi exceptâ in qua paterfamilias cum uxore & liberis in genua provolutus Deum invocabat.* Polani Syntag. cap. 22. fol. 301.
story that *Polanus* relates of an Earth-quake in the year 1584. in *Berna*; in a Mountain violently hurried beyond other Mountains, overturning a whole Village of Ninety houses and families excepting half of one house, in

which

which the Father of the family with his Wife and Children were proſtrate on their knees praying.

So true is that of *Solomon*, *Prov.* 12. 7. *The Wicked are overthrown and are not, but the houſe of the Righteous ſhall ſtand:* God bleſſeth the Habitation of the juſt. He thinks fit ſometimes to diſtinguiſh by his wiſe Providence betwixt the houſes of the *Iſraelites* and *Egyptians:* And experience doth daily ſhew that the houſe is bleſſed where God is ſincerely worſhiped, as the Lord bleſſed the houſe of *Obed-Edom*, and his Houſhold for entertaining the Ark, 2 *Sam.* 6. 11. Prov. 3. 33. Exo. 12. 13.

12. On the contraty God curſeth Prayerleſs-families; that's a Prophecy as well as a Prayer, *Jer* 10 25—*Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not on thy name:* It's a dreadful Prediction; 1. For the wrath threatned, not ordinary, but fury; anger boyled up to the higheſt degree of revenge, anger and fury are ſometimes joyned, and *when God deals in fury his eyes ſpare not, neither hath he pity:* This is dreadful: But 2. Here's the meaſure of it, *Pour out thy fury*; this notes plenty, abundance, variety of ſore Judgments; not one, or two, but multitudes of Plagues, like drops in a Shower, or as Flood-gates opened as a general Inundation, ſpreading it ſelf univerſally, poured out on Children, young Men, Husband and Wife, aged with him that is full of days. Oh what would become of *England* if this fury were as univerſal as Jer. 7. 20. Ezek. 8. 18. Jer. 6. 11. Iſa. 34. 2.

Deſcenſus à ſummis in imum.

the neglect of this family-duty! and this fury is irreſiſtible; it's like a deſcent from above, which can no more be ſtopped and avoided than the Showers of Rain: There is no ſtopping theſe Cataracts of Heaven, no quenching this fire of fierce wrath againſt irreligious Families, when the Lord
Iſa. 66. 15. renders his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. 3. But what is all this for? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? is it for Idolatry, Murder, Drunkenneſs, Blaſphemy, or for ſome horrible, hainous crimes? no, it's for ſins of omiſſion, not knowing God, not calling on God's Name: O miſerable families where Religion is not exerciſed, there theſe threatnings muſt be executed!

Object. *But we ſee no ſuch thing; prayerleſs families flouriſh, live bravely, have all things at*
Job 21. 7, *command, proſper more than others, their houſes*
13. *are ſafe from fear, neither is the Rod of God upon them.*

I muſt confeſs this promiſcuous diſpenſing of outward Providences, that wickedneſs is proſperous, holineſs oppreſſed, hath been an offence to the godly, and an hardening to the wicked: And *David* himſelf was
Pſal 73. 17. puzzled with it, till he went into the Sanctuary, then he underſtood their End, and God's End in this.

Deut. 32. 35 But I anſwer, 1. Forbearance is no ac-
Rom. 9. 22. quittance; a Reprieve is no Pardon; *Their foot ſhall ſlide in due time.* God bears long with ſinners for wiſe ends, till the Veſſels of Wrath

Wrath be fitted for deſtruction. God will be in ſome mens debt till another World: They ſhall have their good things here, and torments hereafter. A wiſe man will chuſe his Heaven hereafter, though he have an Hell here. Luk. 16. 25

2. Yet this Curſe and wrath upon wicked perſons and prayerleſs families is ſecret and inviſible; even in outwards, they may ſow much, and bring in little; eat and not have enough: Yea God curſeth even the Bleſſings of ſuch as worſhip not God; however, they have not a Covenant-right to what they do enjoy; it is not ſanctified to them for their good; for the Creature is ſanctified by the Word of God and Prayer; but prayerleſs families have no outward comforts thus ſanctified: Beſides, the ſaddeſt inviſible Curſe is upon their Souls and Spirits; a blind mind, hard heart, a ſeared conſcience, and a ſpirit of ſlumber, are the greateſt Judgments and Fruits of God's heavieſt fury, *Rom.* 1. 26, 28. 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 11. *Pſal.* 81. 11, 12. It's a dreadful thing when a [*Lord have mercy on them*] is writ upon mens Doors, and they cannot read it, will not believe it, or lay it to heart, *Iſa.* 42. 24, 25. This is next to *Pharaoh's* Plague, and next door to Hell: They that will not heed now, muſt feel this fury, and in the latter days ſhall conſider it perfectly. Read *Jer.* 23. 19, 20. *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. Hag. 1. 6. Mat. 22. 1 Tim. 4. 5.

Thus much for the Reaſons, to prove erecting Family-Altars for God's Worſhip an important duty: The Command of God, Scripture-

Scripture-Types; Natural Religion; Promiſes; Prophecies; Scripture-Examples; Divine Providence; diſcriminating Character; their being Chriſtian-Churches; Governours charge and account; daily neceſſities of Families; God's Bleſſing on praying-families; his Curſe and Wrath upon prayerleſs families.

Chap. IV. *Objections propoſed and anſwered that militate againſt Family-Altars.*

BUT there is no Truth ſo plain, no Duty ſo good, but Satan can furniſh a witty head, and wicked heart with plauſible Arguments againſt it: And it's ſtrange if men have not ſomething to ſay againſt this Duty, that apparently tends to undermine Satan's Kingdom.

Object. 1. *Had Family-prayer been a Duty, we had found it expreſly commanded in Scripture, but we find it not in any expreſs Precept.*

Anſ. 1. Where find you Infant-Baptiſm expreſly commanded in the N. Teſtam.? yet it is plain by neceſſary conſequence, ſo is this. Circumciſion was commanded; there's the like Reaſon for Baptiſm; both are plain to all but perverſe ſpirits. I hinted before that proper conſequence is ſtrong Argument.

2. Let not proud Reaſon dictate to the wiſe God how he muſt ſpeak. General Rules laid down in Scripture are to be applied to particular Caſes, by Nature and Reaſon in ſeveral circumſtances. If God

ſay

ſay Men muſt provide for their families, he leaves it to their diſcretion, what kind of Meat, Cloaths, Lodging, Callings they provide. God bids us pray without ceaſing, in all places, all manner of prayer, and leaves it to prudence for particular places, times, words, company, ſo that it anſwer the main End of God's Glory, Communion with himſelf, and Edification. Let not captious Wits pick quarrels to evacuate the ſubſtance of a Duty, becauſe the circumſtance is not expreſt. God gives Laws to Rational Creatures, and indulgeth us ſo far as to leave us to our liberty in mutable circumſtances, except expreſly preſcribed.

Object. 2. *Jeſus Chriſt prayed not with his family, yet he is the beſt Pattern; if he had prayed with them conſtantly, they would have learned from him, but they want to be taught,* Luk. 11. 1.

Anſ. 1. Chriſt's caſe and ours are far different; what was ſuitable to his Diſciples was not proper to him; he needed not for himſelf to confeſs ſin, ask forgiveneſs, beg mortification, increaſe of grace, aſſurance; ſo that it was not neceſſary that he ſhould ordinarily be their mouth.

2. Yet Scripture-ſilence is no good Argument: And their deſire of inſtruction in Prayer is no good Argument he Prayed not with them; for Prayer is a Perſonal Duty, And our Lord could not be always with them: And yet we find our Lord did occaſionally Pray with his Family: In Gratitude,

Mat.

Mat. 11. 25, 26. In working Miracles, *Mat.* 14. 19. In the Holy Supper, *Luke* 22. 19. And that large and laſt Prayer uttered with his Diſciples, *John* 17. In all which he ſpake what was proper to him as God-Man, and our Mediator; and herein he is an excellent pattern to all Houſholders.

Object. 3. *The Sacrifice of the wicked*; (*and ſo his Prayer*) *is abomination to the Lord: How can you then put them on Praying when moſt are bad?*

Prov. 15. 8.

Anſw. 1. God loſeth not his Authority to Command, becauſe man hath loſt his Capacity to Obey; it is his Duty ſtill, though he cannot perform it in ſuch a due manner as God requires: He is bound to Pray as a Creature though he cannot do it as a Child: Better do it as men can, than not do it at all;

Jonah 3. 8. Prayer is a natural duty: The *Ninevites* muſt cry aloud, and mightily to God, and it was

Act. 8. 22. not in vain: *Simon Peter* bids *Simon Magus* Pray, though in the Gall of bitterneſs.

2. We muſt diſtinguiſh betwixt a reſolved and a returning Sinner: We bid not a Thief pray that he may meet with a Booty, that's

Pſal. 66. 18. abominable; or men *Regarding Iniquity in*

Iſa. 55. 6, 7. *their hearts*: But in a complex ſenſe we bid them, *Turn from their evil ways, and ſo Pray:* Prayer muſt be joyned with Repentance; as Prayer is [*Medium Cultus*, ſo it is *Medium Gratiæ*] as means of carrying the heart to God in Worſhip, ſo it is a mean to obtain Grace. Prayer is the Souls motion Godward, deſire is the Soul of Prayer, and who dare

dare say to the wicked, desire not God, Christ, Faith? By Praying men may learn to Pray right, *For God gives his Holy Spirit to them that ask him.* Luk. 11.13.

Oject. 4. *There's wicked Children or Servants in the Family, how dare we joyn with them? For whose sake God may justly reject us.*

Answ. 1. If the Praying Governour be Godly and pray right, he need not fear non-acceptance: Christ was heard in his Prayer, though *Judas* was present: What think you of poor Ministers Prayers in mixt Congregations? Certainly the presence of unworthy Persons prejudiceth not the entertainment of sincere Worshipers. Act 27.35.

2. Prayer is Gods institution to make bad good, some have been much wrought upon by the Prayers of others, God heard *Stephen* for *Paul* in time; if it advantaged not at present. Mr. *Weems* said of Mr *Bruce* he knockt down the Holy Ghost upon us all: Deny them not this means of Conversion.

Object. 5. *This setting up a Family-Altar for so constant Prayer savours of Forms, and will fill the Country with Formalists and Hypocrites.*

Answ. 1. Forms are not simply condemned, but Forms only, wanting the power of Godliness, 2 *Tim.* 3 5. Our business is not to make Hypocrites but Converts: By Form is meant a Mask, Vizor or Appearance opposed to Substance and Reality: But we persuade and direct to sincerity, as to Priciple, Manner and End of Religious Exercises.

2. But

2. But a Form of Goliness is better than none at all: Men cannot have the Power of Godliness without the Form; no more than you can have the Kernell without the Shell: He that Prays doth something towards Duty, but he that refuseth to Worship God at all, bids open defiance to God's Commanding Authority, and saith; I scorn to bow so much as a Knee to God in Prayer;
Psal. 10. 4. This is a presumptuous Sin: *The wicked through the pride of his heart will not seek after God.* Let him answer it as he dare: The Text saith, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Bodily Exercise profiteth lit-*
1 King. 21. 27. *tle* [πρὸς ὀλίγον] for a little, *i. e.* for a little time, or for a little- *i. e.* in some outward respects, as in *Ahabs* fasting, though it reach not so far as the Eternal Salvation of the immortal Soul: However this is better than a total neglect.

Object. 6. *But such kind of Praying Morning and Evening is a stinting the Spirit, a limiting God to mans time, when the Spirit moves not to it.*

Answ. 1. Christ and his Apostles had set times for Prayer; Jesus oft times resorted into the Garden, *Judas* knew his stated hour and place, *John* 18. 2. *And the Apostles had an hour of Prayer,* Acts 3. 1. Was this stinting the Spirit? Indeed this Objection is levelled against Preaching, Singing, Supper, and all stated Ordinances, how do men know that the Spirit will move at such a season?

2. It's one thing to stint, another to lie in

in the walk of the Spirit: Men are bound to wait at the posts of Wisdoms Doors, and are blessed, and in the road of further blessing; for the wind of the Spirit bloweth where and when it listeth: And no body will say he limits the wind that waits in the Heaven for a fair gale to waft him over: Besides, God expects that men should stir up themselves to take hold on God: Self-excitation is God's appointment to get the heart into frame. How often doth *David* begin low and end high? We must stir up the gift of God in our hearts: A Dead, Dull, Senseless Heart is no supersedeas from Duty: Omission upon indisposition doth but harden the heart, and indispose for Duty, and gratifie Satan, yea and displease God.

Prov. 8. 34. Joh. 3. 8. Isa. 64. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 6.

Object. 7. *This Family-Prayer is but a singular invention of brain-sick novellists, not used of old, and is more adoe than needs.*

Answ. 1. In Scripture-times it was used, and in the purest Primitive-timess; *Basil* saith [*Mane orto die in precationes properare*] that Christians made haste to Prayers by day-brake in the Morning; *Chrysostom* saith we go not [*a mensa ad lectum*] from Table to bed, but to Prayers, lest we be more bruitish than bruits: It were easie to produce instances from *Cyprian*, *Augustin*, *&c.* of Primitive Christians frequency in Prayers: You will say butt these were Church prayers? Answer; Churches were mostly then in Houses, yet some instances prove also daily Family-Prayers: And Godly Persons in all Ages have used it.

2. Can

2. Can men be too Devout? Doth not
Luk.10.42. our Lord ſay, *one thing is needful? Seek firſt*
Mat. 6. 33. *the Kingdom of God: Thou ſhalt Love the Lord*
Mat.22.37. *thy God with all thy Heart, Mind, Strength:*
Can you do too much for God? Can you be
Eccl. 7. 16. too oft with God? Alas! you cannot be over-much righteous, in the internals of Religion: no, nor in the externals, as long as you keep to commanded duties, and one duty croſs not another: Nay, when we have done
Luk.17.10. all that's commanded, yet ſtill we are unprofitable Servants; we have but done our du-
Joh.12.3,4. ty. It was *Judas* that ſaid, *Wherefore is this waſted?* Godly Souls ſtill complain of defects: Whom did you hear complain on their death-bed that they had ſerved God too much, or been too religious?

Object. 8. *They are no better than others that pray in their families; they can lye, cheat, be covetous, proud, paſſionate, cenſorious, hard-hearted.*

Anſ. 1. Take heed what you ſay; act not the Devil's part, to be falſe-accuſers, taking up a falſe report, or without proof. It's well known, that now a-days, if perſons be ſtrict and ſerious in Religious duties, many pick quarrels with them, take advantage againſt them, aggravate their faults; theſe
Act. 28. 22. mens Motes are Beams, yea Mountains; this Sect is every where ſpoken againſt; there needs no further Jury to try them; but if they be praying perſons, they are Hypocrites; as if Piety were a note of Hypocriſie: The Lord rebuke thee, oh Diaboliſt! judge charitably

charitably till you know the truth; you may wrong them, as Primitive Christians were.

2. Suppose they do miss and miscarry, alas! they are but men. Thus the Angel excused honest *Joshua*, when Satan accused him; *Is not this a brand plackt out of the fire?* Zech. 3.13. Alas! he smells of *Babylon* too much; but may not these be upright for the main? and how will God take it, if you slander his Children? But suppose it be true that they are faulty, doth their Religion teach them so? Is this the fault of their praying, or not praying aright? Is it because they are too religious, or defective in it? No, say you, they are Hypocrites; and if they prove so that are so devout, what will become of you, 1 Pet. 4.18. that are so far short of them? If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall you appear?

Object. 9. *We pray in publick and secret, is not that sufficient? what needs family-prayer too? surely God never required so much a-do.*

Ans. 1. One duty cannot supersede another: These are distinct circumstances of performing the same duty: Religion must be carried on in all places, relations; Husband and Wife must pray together; yea and Neighbours must call to each other, and say, Come, come, let us go speedily to pray before the Lord: Think not then to put off Zech. 8. 21. God with one sort of Religiousness, but you must be holy in all manner of conversation, 1 Pet. 1.15. in every turn, turn you which way you will, Ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ. to your general or particular Calling, to a single or married state, to solitariness or

1 Pet. 3.7.

company; you must still take your Religion with you, and practise it as a Member of Church or Family.

2. It's very suspicious whether those worship God sincerely in publick, or at all in their Closets, that worship not God in and with their families. It was the saying of *Lactantius* [*non est vera Religio quæ cum Templo relinquitur*] that's no true Religion which men leave behind them at Church: Men may make a shift to serve God as others do, at Church, for vain-glory, or ostentation, and pretend secret prayer meerly for an evasion; but family-prayer will try whether they worship God sincerely or no: Men see the former, but know not the latter.

Object. 10. *None of my Neighbours use it, if I pray in my family I shall be singular.*

Ans. 1. Wouldst thou chuse rather to
Exod. 23. 2. follow a multitude in evil to Hell, than travel with a few to Heaven? Our Lord saith,
Mat. 5. 47. *What do you more than others?* Or what singular thing do you? Are you content to fare as the most fare? Will you rush with the Herd into the deep, and be damned for company? Is that good-fellowship that ends in the sad reckoning another day? Christ's Flock is a little Flock. But read *Matth.* 7. 13, 14. and consider whether you'll chuse.

2. If you have not the greater, you have the better company to travel with: *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob*, and all the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Ministers, Confessors, Christians, they have all travelled in this

this Road: *For this ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee.* Methinks you ſhould rather chuſe to be Companions of the excellent, whom God will own when he makes up his Jewels; than thoſe Atheiſts that ſay, *It is in vain to ſerve God.* Pſal. 32. 6. Pſal. 16. 8. Mal. 3. 14, --17.

Object. 11. *But I know ſome ſtrict Profeſſors that uſe not to pray in their families, nay, that plead againſt it.*

Anſ. 1. That's no part or property of their goodneſs: I deny not but ſome godly perſons may for a ſeaſon live in the omiſſion of ſome duties, either through want of information, or their own ſloth, or through falſe Teachers, and the power of deluſion; yet this is a temptation, but free grace will recover them, and the new Nature within them will incline them to own their duty, when they are convinced of it, and when they come to themſelves.

2. Yet ſome Profeſſors ſeem good that are not ſo; they may have a name to live, and yet be dead: all's not Gold that gliſters; men may have the face, but not the frame or heart of Chriſtians. How many make a fair ſhew in the fleſh, and account themſelves the only Saints, and are ſo eſteemed by others, that are not owned by the Lord? The complexion of a Saint is one thing, but the conſtitution of a Child of God is another. Some Notioniſts ſpread their ſails, and think themſelves wronged if they be not called the godly Party; but herein they are proved rotten, by caſting off ſome precious Rev. 3. 1. Gal. 6. 12.

truths and neceſſary duties; imitate ſuch at
Pſal. 119. 6. your peril; a ſincere Saint hath reſpect to all God's Commandments.

Object. 12. *We have ſcoffers in our families, that will withdraw, and not joyn, but jear; it may be a Son, or Wife will be doing ſomething elſe that while, and this will breed confuſion, and do hurt.*

Anſ. 1. But who is Maſter, thou or they? If thou haſt loſt thy governing power, be aſhamed of it, and reſume thy Authority. Whoſe Cauſe doſt thou manage, God's, or the Devil's? If the Cauſe be God's, in the name and ſtrength of God, own it, and he will ſtand by thee; fear not Man in the way of duty: It was thy careleſneſs to joyn thy ſelf to an untamed Heifer, or admit an unruly Servant into thy family; add not Rebellion to that ſin; be humbled, and reform.

2. Had never any of God's Children profane wretches in their family? *Abraham* had a perſecuting *Iſhmael*; *Iſaac* a profane *Eſau*; *David* a ſcoffing *Michal*; what did they? did they give over praying? no, they prayed
Gen. 17. 18. more fervently: *Oh that* Iſhmael *may live*
2 Sam. 6. 20, 21, 22. *in thy ſight! David* was ſo far from ceaſing his Devotion, that *Michal*'s ſcornes were as Oyl to inflame his Zeal; *I will yet*, ſaith he, *be more vile than thus*, and will be baſe in mine own ſight; if they account it ſordid baſeneſs, I account it my chiefeſt honour to humble my ſelf before the Lord: And what think you, is a total omiſſion, or vigorous performance of family-duty more likely to win

win and work upon your carnal, ſcornful Relations? I am ſure a laborious charity is better than contemptuous withdrawing; and is uſually bleſſed with ſucceſs; however it's a mean to ſet order.

Object. 13. *I am baſhful, modeſt, and of weak gifts, and cannot faſhion to pray before others; I ſhall but bewray my ignorance.*

Anſ. 1. Canſt thou take upon thee in other Caſes, and not in this? Who commands thy Servants to work? or who inſtructs them in their Calling, or chides them when they diſpleaſe thee? they ſhall hear from thee if they miſs it; and canſt thou not ſpeak to God before them? Curſed is that Modeſty that's aſhamed of duty: Haſt thou not reaſon to fear Chriſt will be aſhamed of thee? Is not this for God's Cauſe? deny him at your peril, he will deny you. Mat. 10. 33. 2 Tim. 2. 12.

2. Are not all in your family underlings to you? have not you Authority over them, to enjoyn them ſilence and reverence? if you have loſt your Authority by your ignorance or childiſhneſs, thank your ſelves. *Thoſe that honour God, he will honour*; but departing out of God's ways, renders men contemptible and baſe: It's Grace and Holineſs that muſt recover your credit. But I know the reaſon why you'll not pray; it's becauſe you think you cannot do ſo well as others, or to get applauſe; this is your pride: But if you would ſhame your ſelves, and do your beſt, God would provide for your credit: Gifts would increaſe. 1 Sam. 2. 30. Mal. 2. 8, 9.

Object. 14. *But I am poor, it's an hard World, we work hard, cannot ſpare time; I have a great family and charge to maintain.*

Anſ. 1. Do'ſt not thou and thy family ſpend as much time in idle talk, ſports, needleſs Viſits, ſitting by the fire, as this would come to? None ſo hard ſet in their Callings, but they might redeem half an hour in the morning, and more at night; yea though it were from ſleep, for God's Service, if they had an heart for God: Conſcience will tell thee, thou ſpendeſt more time, that might be better imployed; but an heart is wanting.

Eph. 5. 15.

2. It's an uſual ſaying, *Meat and Mattins hinder no work:* There's a great truth in it: Prayer expedites buſineſs; for it obtains a bleſſing from God: *Eliezer* [*Abraham*'s Servant] prayed, and God proſpered his Journey: You are Atheiſts if you think work ſtands in prayer-time: No, no, it makes whatſoever you take in hand to proſper. The poor man cried to Mr. *Carter*, *Sir, I work hard, and fare bare, and thrive not*; he anſwered, *Work hard, and pray hard, and ſee what that will do.*

Pſal. 1. 3.

Object. 15. *I, ſaith the rich thriving man in the World, but my hands are ſo full of buſineſs, and Chapmen or Cuſtomers come ſo faſt, or I am to go abroad in my Calling, that I cannot get time for prayer.*

Anſ. 1. I ſhall to this give the ſame Anſwer that Mr. *Ignatius Jurdan* gave to a Shopkeeper in *London*, accounted religious, being very buſie in his Shop early in the morning;

Mr.

Mr. *Jurdan* took him aſide, ſaid, *Sir, I perceive you are very buſie; do you keep up the Trade of Religion in all this throng?* he anſwered, *I hope I do*; I, but ſaith he, *do you viſit God in your Cloſet and Family morning and evening?* he replied, *In the evening I pray conſtantly with my family, but in the morning ſometimes Cuſtomers come and hinder us*; Mr. *Jurdan* ſaid, *I tell you, I would throw theſe goods into the Channel, or ſet a fire on them rather than they ſhould hinder me in my courſe of Devotion, or in the way to Heaven.* So ſay I, Sirs, do you prize gain above godlineſs? then you are none of God's Servants, but the World's Slaves: Say not, it's but for a time, one neglect brings on another, and thy heart will be more hardened; and by miſſing one ſeaſon of Communion with God, you loſe more than all your Eſtates are worth: Are you content, that the World be your Portion? Oh make not gain your godlineſs!

2. How can you expect your gains and riches ſhould be bleſſed to you when you take not God's way to obtain a bleſſing? If you begin not with God; the end will be curſed, God's curſe is in the Houſe of ſuch wicked perſons: However ſuch treaſures of wickedneſs profit nothing; and ſince you will be rich you fall into temptation and a ſnare, and many fooliſh and hurtful luſts which will drown you in deſtruction and perdition: Do not you know that worldly riches cannot ſatisfie? Conſider, the more you get of the World, the more difficult is your

Prov. 3. 34

Prov. 10.

1 Tim. 6. 9

journey to Heaven, and greater your account.

Object. 16. *You bind us to a tedious Bondage, this is a wearisom task to Pray with our Families Morning and Evening, it's not to be endured.*

Answ. 1. It's a sign of a Carnal Heart to be weary of Duty: A gracious Soul thankfully accepts the offer of frequent approaching to God: *Then, saith* David; *will I go to the Altar of God, to God my exceeding joy: It's good for me to draw nigh to God:* This is the height of a Christians preferment, the sweetest recreation, and only gainful imployment: *To them that love God his commands are not grievous;* but these ways of Wisdom are not only pleasant, but pleasantness: Alas Sirs, what Spirits are you of, that say, *What a weariness is it?* Surely Heaven it self would be your Hell, unless your Hearts and Natures were changed.

Psal. 43. 4.
Psal. 73. 28.
1 Joh. 5. 3.
Prov. 3. 17.
Mal. 1. 13.

2. It is a dreadful token of Gods rejecting that man and of that Mans forsaking the Lord, that will rather pick quarrels with Divine Commands than obey them: Remember what became of them that said, *This is an hard saying who can hear it? They went back and walked no more with Christ.* It's a sign thou takest thy Religion for low and base ends, and when those ends are attained then farewell Christ; And Oh the wretched end of forlorn Apostates, and whither wilt thou go for a better Master, where wilt thou find a better Service? will'st thou prefer Satans

Joh. 6. 60, 66.

Satans Drudgery to Gods Service which is perfect freedom? Ah ſinner thou haſt the black brand of Reprobation upon thee, and and ſhalt be filled with thy own ways. Joh. 12. 26. Prov. 14. 14

Object. 17. *Saith one, I never uſed this Family-Prayer and have been an Houſe-keeper this Twenty, Thirty, or Forty years, and am loath to bring up a new Cuſtom, or condemn my former Practices.*

Anſw. 1. Cuſtom in ſin, or ſinful neglects doubles the ſin, and hardens the heart, *Jer.* 13. 23. *Can the* Ethiopian *change his Skin— Then may ye alſo do good that are accuſtomed to do evil:* What think you, is it an extermination or aggravation of a fault to plead Cuſtom? Will the Thief ſay to the Judge, My Lord, I have been ſo accuſtomed to ſtealing that I cannot leave it? Oh ſay not I will go to Hell becauſe I have travelled in that Road all my days, and am loath to change——

2. Converting Grace can break off a bad Cuſtom, yea ſanctifying work will turn an old Stream into a new Channel, or rather renew the Souls Faculties and make a new Creature, or Creation; *Old things paſs away, and behold all things are become new*; 2 Cor 5. 17. new Principles, Motives, Rule and End: You are not true Chriſtians, if you be not new Creatures; *And if you be not found in Chriſt, you are loſt for ever.* You had need pray and pray again for new Covenant-Mercy; *That God would give you a new Heart, and a new Spirit—That you may walk in his Statutes.* Phil. 3. 9. Ezek. 36. 26, 27.

Eph. 4. 22, 23, 24. 1 Pet. 1. 18. *Statutes. Be not content with the Old Man,* that corrupt rotten Image of Old *Adam, but put on the New Man,* that will make you capable of new Acts, in a new manner: *Better late than never: Be not wedded to old Traditions.*

Object. 18. *I have used it formerly, but got no good by it, and so gave it over; and if I begin again, I doubt I shall not hold out.*

Answ. 1. Whose fault was that? Was it God's fault or thine? The blame must not be laid on the Duty but on the Person: Thousands have got good by it, and would not lay it aside for all the Worlds wealth; If thy heart had been right, thou wouldst have held on thy way, if thy hands had been clean thou wouldst have been stronger and stronger: Alas that thou shouldest lose thy reward, by losing what thou hast wrought; Poor Soul, thou hast Run in vain, all thy Labour is lost, thy former Righteousness shall not be mentioned for thee, but against thee.

Job 17. 9. 2 John 8. Ezek. 18. 24.

2. Who persuaded thee to leave off Family-Prayer? You did run well, who hindred you? Not God or his Ministers; this persuasion cometh not of him that called you: No, no, it was the Devil and a Wicked Heart that bewitched you: And is it not egregious folly, *having begun in the Spirit, to think to be made perfect by the Flesh?* Will you go out of God's blessing into the warm Sun? *What iniquity have you found in God or in his ways?* Oh gratifie not the Devil, and Flesh, by saying, *It is invain to God; Or what should*

Gal. 5. 7, 8. Gal. 3. 1, 3. Jer. 2. 5. Mal. 3. 14. 2 Kin. 6. 33.

ſhould I wait for the Lord any longer? Come Sirs, renew you old Acquaintance, *Return to your firſt Husband*; receive your ancient convictions, impreſſions; engage the ſtrength of God and you ſhall hold on Hoſ. 2. 7.

Object. 19. *I like not this preciſeneſs, you ſhall never perſuade me to it; you ſpend your breath in vain, yet I hope to be ſaved, as well as the beſt of you all: God is merciful.*

Anſw. 1. Now Fleſh and Blood and carnal reaſon ſpeak out, and vent the natural malignity of a wicked heart, *the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* Oh that any of Gods creatures ſhould ſpit ſuch venom againſt its maker! How far are you from bleſſed *Paul*, who when God called him by his Grace—*He conferred not with Fleſh and Blood.* Will you ask the Devils Advice whither you ſhall be God's Children or no? Will you not ſerve God without the Devils leave? Well go on in your gratifying God's enemy, and ſee the iſſue, it will be bitterneſs in the End. Rom. 8. 7. Gal. 1. 16.

2. Dare you ſtand by this, anſwer at God's Bar and great Tribunal? Dare you then ſay, Lord thou didſt indeed bid us Pray, but we had no mind of that Duty; we loved not thee, nor did we approve of thy ways; we thought they were too ſtrict, and bound us too ſtrait; we had more mind of our carnal eaſe, and ſenſual luſts; we were Latitudinarians; and reſolved upon it, we will not have this man to rule over us, whatever it Luk. 19. 14.

coſt

coſt us? Well Sirs, think not not much if
Prov. 1. 25, God ſay, *You have ſet at nought all my Coun-*
26. *cel and would none of my Reproof; I alſo will*
Pſal. 50. 21. *laugh at your calamity: You thought I was alto-*
gether ſuch an one as your ſelves, but I will re-
prove you: Now is the day of Vengeance,
Mercy hath an end, and Juſtice takes place;
Luk. 19. 27. *and thoſe mine Enemies that would not that I*
ſhould Reign over them, bring them hither and ſlay
them before me.

Object. 20. *Well, now I am convinced Prayer is a Duty, Family-Prayer is my Duty, and I have a mind to perform it; but I know not how to to manage it, I am a meer ſtrangeer to it, God help me, I am a meer Ignoramus, and know not what to ſay.*

Anſw. 1. Where's the fault? Haſt thou not injoyed Means, Helps, Ordinances many years for the good of thy Soul? Do'ſt thou not ſee others as very Idiots as thou attain to excellent gifts, under the ſame helps, that can pray very pertinently, even extempore; but I gueſs the true cauſe, it's either the Pride of thy heart, that thou canſt not pray ſo well as others, or it's thy lazineſs that thou haſt not diligently uſed means to get
Prov. 1. 32. knowledge or excite thy faculties: thy ſloth will ſlay thy Soul; and thy damnation will be juſt.

2. God ſtands not upon Gifts, Elocution, or ready Utterance, the Sacrifices of God
Pſal. 51. 17. are a broken Spirit; *a broken and a contrite heart, God will not deſpiſe.* If thou haſt not precious Liquor, canſt thou not offer him thy

thy empty Bottles? If thou canſt not Pray, canſt thou not fall down on thy Knees and tell God thou canſt not Pray? Canſt thou not deſire him to help thee to pray? Yea, canſt thou not ſay, as much as the poor *Publican, God be merciful to me a Sinner*; to us Sinners? If it be not wilfulneſs but weakneſs, God will indulge thee much, his Spirit will help thy Infirmities, both what to ſay, and how to pray. But in this caſe I ſhall give ſome helps anon.

Luk. 18. 13.

Rom. 8. 26.

Chap. V. *An uſe of Conviction, Lamentation over Prayerleſs-Families.*

THE firſt uſe I ſhall make of this point is of Lamentation, and ſevere Admonition; if this be ſo, as I have Proved, and Anſwered Objections againſt it; That Governours muſt Act the parts of Prieſts to Erect Altars for the Worſhip of God in their Families: Then I doubt it will fall heavily upon many thouſand Families in *England*, for which I fear God's Vengeance is hanging over their heads: God looks and expects, that in a Profeſſing Kingdom, a Nation where the Goſpel hath been ſo long owned by Publick Authority, that Religion Should have been more owned and practiſed in Families, than I fear it is; God may juſtly wonder, *That there is no Interceſſor*—Therefore how juſtly may the Lord put on *Garments of Vengeance*—and *Repay recompence* to theſe Iſlands: Wo is us that there is ſo few ſerious gracious Families

Iſa. 59. 16, 17, 18.

Families to be found in these Islands: Religion runs at a low Ebb, serious devotion is banished from among us: Some Families are. 1. Without Priests. 2. Without Altar. 3. Without Sacrifice: Or, 4. The Sacrifice of Devils, instead of Gods, or joyned with Gods?

A Brief hint of all these.

1. There are many Houses without Priest, *i. e.* where the Governour of the Family hath no Religion, is not devoted to God, anointed with the Spirit, and consecrated to be a Gospel-Priest to Erect an Altar or offer Sacrifice: A poor Carnal Master of a Family, that knows not how to frame for Gods Worship, alas poor ignorant sott! He is not capable of speaking a Word from God to his Family, or of speaking a word to God for them: You go to bed
Psal. 127. 2. and rise, one time after another, Prayerless; you can keep them up late and call them up early to their work, but never say, come to Prayers: not a word of God all the day long, not a Chapter read, not a Psalm Sung, not a Prayer put up in the Family from day to day; nay it's well if there be any solemn praying for a blessing at Meats, or giving God thanks for meat, but Schollars grace, as they say; every one for himself; so they sit down and rise up like beasts; at best, they fall to saying [God bless my Meat, Amen] and so put off God with a compliment: Ah graceless Master, ah graceless Family! (*i. e.* as a Family) wo be to thee.

1. How

1. How durſt you Marry, ſet up Houſes, or take the charge of of a Family upon you, that are no better furniſhed for it? Do you not ſhame with your ſelves, that you cannot ſay a word to God for them? No not if thy Wife, Child or Servant lie a dying, and their Souls ready to be damned, thou haſt not a word to ſpeak for their recovery or Salvation, O wretched miſcreant!

2. Do you not condemn your ſelves, that can teach your Children and Servants a trade to get a livelyhood by, and live hanſomly in this World, and not one word for another World? You command them to work, never to Worſhip God: You quarrel with them for offending you, never for offending God: You expect they ask you for what they need, but you will not ask any thing of God either for them or your ſelves.

3. Are you not worſe than Idolatrous *Micah*, *Judg.* 17. 5. *He had an houſe of God's, and made an Ephod and Teraphim, and conſecrated one of his Sons, who became his Prieſt:* Much what like ſome ignorant Parents that will ſet a Lad to ſay a Primmer-grace; better ſo than none at all. But *Micah* was not content with that, but got an Hedge-hog Prieſt, a wandring Levite to ſay Divine Service in his family; and now he's a jolly fellow, and thus boaſts, *v.* 13. *Now know I that the Lord will do me good, ſeeing I have a Levite to my Prieſt.* This poor Idolater will riſe in Judgment againſt thee.

4. How will you anſwer your charge?

do

do not your Children and Servants cry out, Oh pity us, pray for us, cruel Parents; you brought us ſinful creatures in a ſinful World, help us out of this woful ſtate! But alas! you have not a word to ſay for them, with them; you regard their precious Souls no more than an Oxe or Horſe; their blood will be required at your hands: How will they curſe you in Hell? Oh wo is me! had I lived in a praying-family, I might have been converted and ſaved: I never heard a word of God except blaſpheming his Name: How will this grind your Ears, and grieve your Hearts another day!

2. Other families are without an Altar; have not ſo much as a form of godlineſs; not ſo much as a ſhew of Religion: Oh! that it ſhould be ſaid of many houſes of *England*, as of *Iſrael*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 3. *Now for a long ſeaſon* Iſrael *had been without the true God, without a teaching Prieſt, and without Law*: As God threatens in *Hoſ.* 3. 4. That the wretched Jews ſhall be without any Religion true or falſe, as it hath been ſince their murdering Chriſt to this day.

1. How do theſe wretches reſemble the Beaſts? that own God no more than a Dog or Swine; and it is better to be a Beaſt, than to be compared to a Beaſt: Yea God calls in dulleſt creatures to condemn an irreligious People.

Iſa. 1. 13. Jer. 8. 7, 8.

2. How can you expect a bleſſing upon your mercies? they are unhallowed things as to you; nay, they are accurſed to you, and,

and, if God give commiſſion, will riſe up in Rebellion againſt you: Thou haſt not ſanctified thy Houſe, ſo it's not eſtimated as to thee. Lev. 27. 14.

3. You hinder God's Intereſt in the World, and do what you can to propagate Irreligion to future Generations; how will they plead the practice of Anceſtors? My Father never prayed in family, nor will I: Omiſſion is a Trade ſoon learned, hardly rooted out: Here *Jeroboam* made *Iſrael* ſin many Generations after: Oh you little know how far your ſin may ſpread! 1 King. 14. 16.

4. Do you not often read your ſin in the puniſhment of it? When you are Atheiſts in not worſhipping God, your Children are Atheiſts in denying God: You are defective in duty, they abound in iniquity: You pray not for them, God rejects them, and leaves them to notorious Villainies, to be puniſhed by the Judges; or God ſtrikes them with ſome aſtoniſhing Judgment, as he did *Eli*'s Sons: This will make thy heart ake, and call thy ſins to remembrance.

3. Some families poſſibly have a Prieſt, an Altar, but want a Sacrifice: As *Iſaac* ſaid to his Father *Abraham*; *Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the Lamb for a burnt-offering?* So ſay I, here is materials, the outward form, but where is the marrow, and myſtery of true godlineſs? Doſt thou give up thy Soul and Body as a Living Sacrifice to God? Doſt thou bring a broken and contrite heart for ſin? Doſt thou Gen. 22. 7. Rom. 12. 1. Pſal. 51. 17.

practically obey Divine; Commands, and do
Heb. 13. 16. all the good thou canſt in thy Place? doſt
Heb. 13. 10. thou eſpecially take Jeſus Chriſt in the Arms
Eph. 1. 6. of thy Faith, and expect acceptance only in the Beloved? Doſt thou only Compliment with God? Wo be to thee.

1. If there be not a Principle of Grace within, thou art but a lifeleſs Machine, like a Parrot that ſpeaks articulatly without Senſe
Pſal. 17. 1. and feeling, *David's* Prayer went not out of feigned Lips, why ſo? he had found
2 Sam. 7. 27. in his heart to Pray his Prayer, mind it; thou muſt find thy Prayer in thy heart; before thou utter it with thy lips, and then thou muſt Pray a Prayer; and not only ſay a Prayer as moſt do: Some will down on their knees and patter over a few words in a heartleſs manner, when their minds are roving to a thouſand trifles; and this is their devotion they brag of, and God muſt be pleaſed with; whereas it is a poor Heartleſs, Lifeleſs, Spiritleſs form, without
2 Tim. 3. 5. power, which God rejects: This Lip-la-
Iſai. 29. 13. bour is but Loſt-labour: for it is a mocking
Gal. 6. 7. of God, and he will not be mocked.

2. If you ſleepily, ſluggiſhly, unſeaſonably perform your Family-duties: Some ſpend all the day, and the evening in work or worldly buſineſs; it may be in idle chat, and vain diſcourſe, and juſt when they are for going to bed, ruſh up and fall on their knees, and patter over a few words betwixt ſleeping and waking: And moſt of the Family fitter for their beds than for Devotion: Alas!

Alas! Sirs, doth not God clap a Curſe upon ſuch as do the work of the Lord negligently? and doth not God ſay, *Curſed be the deceiver that hath in his flock a Male, and voweth and Sacrificeth to the Lord a Corrupt thing?* Jer. 48. 10. Mal. 1. 14. Ah! Soul, hadſt thou not a Male, a better, fitter hour in thy Power, than that ſleepy hour at bed-time? muſt God be put off with the Worlds leavings? doth not he that gives thee all thy time deſerve the beſt? doth not God bid thee ſeek firſt his Kingdom? and ſhall this be laſt? muſt the very Flower and Cream of thy time be ſpent in Vanity, and God be thus ſerved? O! be aſhamed and bluſh at thy diſingenuous dealing with the Almighty.

3. If you come to own God in Family exerciſes, by Fits and Starts, in a good mood, or when ſome affliction lyes on You or Your Family, Oh how ſlaviſh are you? but Alas! there are ſome that are never gracious, but in Pangs; never Serious, but when ſeverely handled, like a Dog under the Cudgel, and then it is but howling, not Child like Crying, *in their affliction they will ſeek God early* and earneſtly, they pour out a Prayer when his chaſtning is upon them; and never elſe: Poor Souls, ſhould you not come to the Throne of Grace; *to find Grace to help in time of need?* And when is the day, wher's the place, and what's the ſtate wherein you have not need of God? are you not daily Sinning, and need Pardon as well as Daily-bread, may you not dye this Day, this Night? are not Morning and Evening due times to ſeek Hoſ. 7. Hoſ. 5. 15. Iſa. 26. 16. Heb. 4. 16.

God; Some will not Pray in their Families, but a little on Lords-days Nights, when they have nothing else to do: as though all time were not Gods week-day as well as Lords-day; surely God is to be owned daily, *I will*, said *David*, *daily perform my vows*, and *I* cry unto thee daily: and why should you be as *the Morning Cloud and early Dew*, when God is daily teaching you with his benefits, and therefore must be daily praised, not Lords-day but week-day, and every day in the week; what if God forget or forsake you any day, what would become of you?

Psal. 61. 8. 86. 3. Hos. 6. 4. Psal. 68. 19. 72. 15.

4. If you miss it in the End of your Family-dutys you will be rejected, and alas! thousands propound wrong Ends to themselves, in this as in other excercises of Religion: some keep up Family-duty, because it was the custom of their Ancestours, and it would be a kind of disparagement to degenerate: Some to gratify a Religious Wife, or Pious Servant; some to make a shew and ostentation of their gifts: others to stop the mouth of a clamorous Conscience: Some for a Worldly gain: others as the *Pharisees* to be seen of Men; nay it's well if some Pray not for a Cloak of their Villainy, that devour Widows Houses, and for a pretence make long Prayers; long Prayers are not simply condemned in themselves, for it's a sign of rare Piety, [*Nam quo quisq; Sanctior est, precandi studio magis est deditus*] the more Holy men are, the more Prayerful: But, Oh! damnable Hypocrisy, to make so Holy an Ordinance truckle

Mal. 6. Mat. 23. 14.

truckle to ſo vile a luſt: it's well if that wickedneſs be dead and buried with the *Phariſees*: of whom *Calvin* ſaith, their aſſiduous Praying was a kind of ſtalking-horſe, or occaſion to their filthy lucre, neither did they ſell their Prayers otherwiſe than Mercenary men order their day-labours.

Quia illis precandi aſſiduitas turpis lucri ſit aucupium, neque enim aliter preces vendebant, quam Mercenarii diurnas operas locant: Calv. *in loc* —— *quod res per ſe laudabilis in pravum finem converſa eſt, nam ubi ex conductitiis precibus, captatur quæſtus, quo magis creſcit fervida (ut loquuntur) devotionis ſpecies, eo magis profanatur Dei nomen. Id. ibid.*

For (ſaith that Prince of Interpreters,) *Where gain is gotten by ſuch deſigning Prayers, the more fervent that kind of Devotion increaſeth, the more is the name of God Prophaned:* thus he. I beſeech you therefore tremble to think of proſtituting ſo Glorious a work to ſo Ignominious an End: for the End makes or marrs an Action.

4. As ſome Families are without Prieſt-Altar, Sacrifice of the right kind, ſo there are ſome that have ſomething of all theſe, yet have another Altar and Sacrifice inconſiſtent with theſe, that Swear by the Lord, and that Swear by *Malcham*: that ſet up the Devils Altar by the Lords; as the *Samaritans* of old, it's ſaid in one verſe *they feared the Lord*, in the next verſe *they feared not the Lord*, why ſo? the anſwer is put betwixt them, they feared the Lord, and ſerved their own Gods, 2 *Kings* 17. 32, 33, 34. *i. e.* They did materially do the ſame things in Worſhip that *Iſrael* did, for fear of being hurt by the Lions, *ver.* 25, but

Zeph. 1. 5.

but they had Gods of their own, *ver.* 29. and God could not endure this Mongrel-Religion, and interprets it to be no true Fear, or due Worſhip of God: for God will not be partner with Idols, he only muſt be ſerved or not
Ezek. 43. 8. at all: Our Lord takes it ill when men ſet their threſholds by his threſholds, there poſt by his Poſts, — thus they defile his Holy Name by their abominations: theſe are a grievous nauſeance to the Holy and jealous God: ſhall the Throne of Iniquity have fel-
Pſal. 94. 20. lowſhip with thee? can men ſerve God and *Mammon*? muſt *Bacchus*, *Venus*, *Vulcan*, be ſet up cheek by joul with the Living and True God? wickedneſs practiſed in the Governours, tolerated in Inferiours: Swearing, Curſing, Lying, Cheating, Drunkeneſs, Uncleaneſs, mocking at Strictneſs of Religion? obſerve it, ther's no true Worſhip where there is not ſtrict Diſciplin: how ſad is it to ſee ſome men devout in Worſhip profligate in Practice? one thing on their knees, another on their feet: Pray like Angels, practiſe like Devils? confeſs Sin one hour, commit it the next: plead for Pardon, to obtain a Diſpenſation; Alas! that any now a days ſhould reſemble *Iſrael* of old, that would Steal, Murder, commit adultery, ſteal falſly? and come &
Jer. 79. 10. ſtand before god in his houſe, or worſhip & ſay,
11. *we are delivered to do all theſe abominations*: or like the impudent whore, *pro.* 7. 14 I have peace-Offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows: ſo ſome men think they may do as they liſt, and caſt the reins in the Neck to run to all licentiouſ-

licentiouſneſs, why ſo? have they no Religion? yes, they have ſaid their Prayers, and are in good Reputation for Religion, and ſince they have been ſo Serious, now they hope God will not take notice of their infirmities, but over-look them, as the man Mr *Shepheard* tells of, that frequented Taverns, Ale-houſes, and Whore-houſes all day, yet would not go out without Prayer in the Morning, Oh horrible Impiety: this is groſſe Atheiſm, for, 1. It is a making God the Patron of their Impiety, as if the Holy God approved and incouraged theſe Vices: ſo they bribe him with a few Formal-duties; But what ſaith God to ſuch vile Atheiſts, that hate inſtruction, and caſt his words behind them—and then allow themſelves in all villainies, — *theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence, thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelf, but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine Eyes*: a time is coming that God will vindicate his Juſtice and Omniſcience againſt theſe audacious Sinners, that did miſconſtrue and abuſe his long ſuffering; as if by his connivance he had juſtified or allowed their courſes. Pſal. 50. 17. 21.

2. This greatly diſhonours God, and takes his name in Vain: as long as you ſay one thing and do quite contrary; you diſcredit your profeſſion: whilſt you will be called *Jews*, or *Chriſtians*, make your boaſt of God, know his Will — and practiſe it; otherwiſe through breaking the Law you diſhonour God, *for the name of God is Blaſphemed among* *Dicitur Chriſtiani ad Contumeliam Chriſti. Sal.* Rom. 2. 17. 24.

the Gentiles through You— You harden wicked men againſt God's ways, and make them conclude that either God is as bad as you, or approves of you, or is Ignorant of your doings,
Exod. 20. elſe he would be avenged on you: *he will not hold you guiltleſs that take his name in vain.*
Pſal. 66. 18. 3. How can you expect acceptance that thus *regard Iniquity in your hearts?* You bring your Sacrifice with a wicked heart, therefore it is
Pro. 21. 27. *abomination to the Lord: when you ſpread your*
See Iſai. 1. 11, 19. *hands*, ſaith God, *Yea when you make many Prayers, I will not hear, Your hands are full of Blood*, — God will diſown your Perſons and
Mal. 2. 3. performances, and even ſpread the dung of your Solemn Feaſts upon your Faces: methinks when you read that aſtoniſhing Text, in *Pſal.* 50. 16. your Conſciences ſhould fly in your faces, as it did in *Origen's*, *But unto the wicked God ſaith, what haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou ſhouldeſt take my Covenant in thy Mouth?* O tremble at ſuch a ſharp rebuke.

4. You tempt your Children and Servants to be Atheiſts, while you act ſo contrary to your Prayers, Profeſſions: juſt as ſcandalous Miniſters that ſpeak Well and live Ill; people are ready to ſay if this man believed himſelf what he impoſeth on us, he would act at another rate: will he direct us this way to Heaven, and go clean contrary? ſurely he thinks it's but a fancy, elſe he would embrace it himſelf Oh! what have both to anſwer for? you lead them to Hell by your Example, offend them,
Mat. 23. 15. hinder them in Heavens way; and make them manyfold more the Children of Wrath than they

they were. And by this means you gratifie Satan, he will give you leave to ſay well and Pray well, ſo that you be ſtill in his Fetters by Wicked works: this mightily ſtrengthens his intereſt: yea by this means you fortifie your ſelves againſt Convictions, and go Hoodwink'd to Hell, for you will not believe but that your ſtate is ſafe as long you can Pray ſo well, and are ſo Religious in your Families: and alas! though you bolſter up your ſelves with an imagination of your intereſt in Chriſt, yet abundance of Scriptures tell you, you have nothing to do with him, without holyneſs in heart & life, *for he gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and Purifie to himſelf a peculiar People Zealous of good Works:* And be it known to you that it's not ſaying a few Prayers, according to which you muſt be Judged another day, *but according to what you have done whether it be good or bad*; Nay theſe very Family Prayers, without a principle of Grace, and Holy Life, will aggravate your Sin and Condemnation: your Hypocriſy will ſink you deeper in Hell, and your long Prayers will make you receive greater damnation: for the Furnace of Hypocrites is ſeven times hotter than others, and Conſcience will torment you the more: nor is it a ſprinkling a little Holy-water in your houſes that will remove the Curſe of God, that lyes on your Families, contracted by your wickedneſs, Covetouſneſs and unjuſt gain: for brevity I referr you to *Hab.* 2. 9. 10, 11, *Zech.* 5. 3. *Pro.* 15. 25, 27.

Tit. 2. 14.

2 Cor. 5. 10.

Mat. 23. 14. Mat. 24. 51.

I ſay not all this to diſcourage any from Family-Prayer, but to deter from Sin, and regulate Prayer, and that ſuch ſpecious Hypocrites and formaliſts may be alarmed to Repentance reformation.

A word more to ſuch inferiours as live in praying Families: young perſons, look to your ſtate, it's not living amongſt godly perſons, that will make you godly, nor yet complying with Praying geſtures that will denomintae you Saints or Goſpel-Worſhipers: you may do as your Governours would have you for Carnal ends: as young Joaſh *did right in the ſight of the lord all the days of* Jehojadah: but his heart was not right, he prov'd naught; ſo may You; if you be unprincipled, you will either gaze about you, or think of other things or fall aſleep which is the common practice of Young Perſons, when their Parents or Maſters are at Prayer: I ſhall but relate a paſſage of that Pregnant Young man Mr *Janeway*, to his Brother ſleeping at Family-Prayer, Oh, ſaith he, what an high contempt is this of the great God! how little ſenſe of your own danger, what dreadful Hypocriſie! what a miracle of Patience you were not wakned in Hell-flames! This reproof ſoftened his Brothers heart, and wrought ſavingly on him as was hoped, the Child being about 11 years of Age: Oh! that it might have this effect on guilty Souls.

2Chro. 24. 2. Mr. *Clarks* laſt vol. of lives, *fol.* 66.

Alas! Sirs, are not you concerned in the Prayers of the Family? while you ſleep, Satan watcheth, and rocks the Cradle? and be it known

known to you, your judgment ſleeps not, your damnation ſlumbereth not: for ought you know you may wake in Hell; what meaneſt thou O Sleeper? ariſe, call upon thy God; if ſo be that God will think upon thee that thou Periſh not? 2 Pet. 2. 3. Jonah 1. 6.

But beſides, there are graceleſs Souls in Praying Families: alas! how many walk unſuitably, will Swear, Lye, be Wanton, Unclean, tippling Drunken perſons, that commit lewdneſs when they are out of their Fathers or Maſters ſight, and think, if they can but hide their pranks from the Eye of their Superiours, all's right Ah poor Atheiſt, doth not God ſee thee, *Underſtand you bruitiſh among the People, ye Fools, when will ye be Wiſe? he that planted the Ear ſhall he not hear? he that formed the Eye, ſhall he not See?* Be ſure your ſin will find you out: And do not others ſee you? will not they cry ſhame on you? and reflect upon the Families where you were bred, or have lived? Oh what a reproach and diſparagement do you caſt on the Inſtruments of your Education? what grief are you to the Godly, that ſhake the head, and cover their faces to behold you? where's your imitation of Godly patterns? is this the fruit of their pains, the anſwer of their Prayers? were you thus taught? Wo be to you that muſt be ſnatch't out of Godly-Families, and caſt among Devils, you had better never have been born, or born among *Turks* or *Pagans*, your condemnation will be aggravated; your own Conſciences will fly in your faces: Pſal. 94. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Oh

Oh how many good instructions have I slighted! how many convictions have I stifled, What great Motionss have I resisted, good examples contradicted! I have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined mine Ears to them that instructed me! and now I must mourn without hope, and dye without instruction, or any to pray for me.

Prov. 5.11, 12, 13, 14.

Chap. VI. *Motives to perswade Governours of Families to set up Altars to God, for his Solemn Worship.*

AND now Friends, what remains but a due Compliance to this call? Oh that Sacred Altars were set up for Gods Solemn Worship, in all the Families through the Kingdom! were God duely Worshiped in all Houses, how happy a Nation should we be! we might hope that God would tarry with us, and Bless us: if men would Pray as Christians, and live as Christians, things would be better with us than they are: let none mistake us, together with the Worship of God we must discover the necessity of a saving Principle in the heart, and suitable practice in the life; men must first be good, then they will do good: and they must be first united to Christ, or neither will follow: for he saith, *without me* [χωρὶς ἐμοῦ.] being divided from me] *you can do nothing*: you can do nothing Spiritually, nothing acceptably; Oh Sirs do not think to put off God with a few Dutys, or formal performances without Sense

Joh. 15. 5.

Sense and Savour: God saith, *I desired Mercy and not Sacrifice*, (*i. e.* not only Sacrifice,) and the Knowledg of God more than Burnt-Offerings: the word *Mercy* is a Synechdoche comprehending all the dutys of the second Table under one: by *Sacrifice* is meant Synechdochically all instituted Ordinances and Worship, all the affirmative precepts of the second and fourth Commandments; but yet Prayer to God is of such absolute necessity, and founded in Nature (if it be granted that there is a God,) that the Heathen could prefer it to Sacrifices, saying [Εὐχὰς τοῖς Θεοῖς, ἀ Βόας θύε] offer Prayers to the Gods not Oxen: but though Prayer it self be a natural duty, yet the Circumstances of time and place may be various as occasion is offered; hence Divines say, Negative Precepts bind [*semper et ad semper*] always and to all times; affirmative bind indeed [*semper*] always, but not [*ad semper*] to all times; therefore Pray continually, if it be done in season God looks upon it as always, or continually done, but if another duty of great importance be to be done at that instant, God dispenseth with the former and it ceaseth to be a duty then, yet the duty continues, and must not be totally superseded: only God will have Sacrifice, but not without the Spirit; for instituted Worship, without natural Worship, is not regarded: *he will be Worshiped in Spirit and in truth*; nor will God accept these Prayers and Sacrifices as an Attonment for Sin, or a dispensation to continue in Sin, if you leave out Christ

See this fully explained by Mr. *Burroughs* on *Hos.* 6. 6. pag. 600. 618.

See 10 instance *ib.* p. 603.

Joh. 4 24.

Chriſt in the former, and make uſe of Chriſt in the latter, your Prayers are abominable.

Having premiſed this, I ſhall ſubjoyn a few Motives to peſuade You to Family-Prayer; beſides the Reaſons to prove it a duty, which I deſire you to review, and learn to practiſe this leſſon, as you would obey a Divine Command; Anſwer old Teſtament Types; not act againſt nature it ſelf; accomplith promiſes and Prophecies; imitate Godly Examples; Anſwer divine Providence; diſtinguith yours from Profane Families; approve your ſelves and Families to be little Churches; as you will give account of the charge committed to your truſt; obtain a ſupply of your Family-neceſſitys; and a bleſſing upon your ſelves and yours; and avoid God's curſe and wrath upon your Families; fall cloſe to this duty; I have anſwered many objections.

And now I Beſeech you in the Bowels of Chriſt to ſet up Altars; and offer your ſelves and Families wholly and intirely to the Lord, as a whole Burnt-offering for Gods-ſake who made you for himſelf, daily preſerves you, and can plentifully reward your Obedience, and revenge your Diſobedience? 2. I Beſeech you for Chriſts ſake who laid down his Life for you, *that he might purchaſe you to himſelf, a peculiar People zealous of Good works.* 3. For the Holy Ghoſts ſake, which is moving you to duty, ſuggeſting good things into your minds, will help your infirmities, Oh do not quench it grieve it. 4. For the Churches ſake, for Zions ſake hold not your peace

Tit. 2. 14.

peace, but help the travelling Church in her Pangs till she be delivered. 5. For the Nations sake, that is almost drowned in Atheism and Sensuality, and daily subject to Gods displeasure and fury. 6. For your poor children and servants sake, who need your Prayers for their Conversion, Pardon and Reconciliation with God. 7. For your own Souls sake that are oft under guilt, imperfect in Grace; and have much work and burden upon your hands and a great account to make? Surely if you have any sense upon your hearts of any of these things, you will instantly, constantly and affectionatly call upon God in your Families. Again, let me urge you with the benefits of this work of Family-Prayer. Isa. 62. 1.

1. This Altar-Devotion will be the best Ornament to your houses; no Pictures, stately Rooms or houshold good will be such neat and Splendid furniture as this Worship of God: the bravest hangings and most Glorious Paintings, are but Sordid and Nauseous Excrements to this; it is this that renders a beggers Cottage far more honourable than a Princes Pallace without it: *Righteousness exalteth a Nation* [and family] *but Sin is a reproach to any People or Person*: this is far before full bags, Magnificent tables, and entertainment, a large train of attendants: for God is there, as the poor Hermit-like Philosopher said, [ἔνεστιν οἱ Θεοὶ] here dwell the Gods? So the high and lofty one dwells — with the *contrite and humble Spirit*, in the most homely habitation. Pro. 14.34. Isai. 57.15.

habitation. What a comely ſight is it to behold all the members of a family Proſtrate on their knees every Morning and Evening! to hear Melodious Praiſes to God unanimouſly Sung! 'tis an Emblem of Heaven: it is recorded of the Prince of *Anhalts* Houſe that it was [*Templum, Academia, Curia,*] a Church, an Academy, and Court, where himſelf was as Prieſt, Tutour, Judg and Soveraign Lord: Oh happy ſuch a family! I may ſay of ſuch a Governour as the Queen of *Sheba* of *Solomon, happy are thy men, happy*
1 Kin. 10. 8. *are theſe thy Servants which ſtand continually before thee!* This, this only is the Glory of a Family.

2. This is not only the Ornament, but muniment and defence of a Family: *he that*
Pſal. 91. 1. *dwelleth in the ſecret place of the Moſt High, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty!* Communion with God uſually is attended with protection from God; if any be ſafe it is the Godly that ſhall be ſafe? *Lot*'s Family muſt be delivered from *Sodoms flames*: the Lord ſhall create upon every dwelling-place
Iſai. 4. 5. of *Mount-Zion*, as well as upon her Aſſemblies, *a Cloud and Smoak by day* (that the Enemy ſhall not find them) *and the ſhining of a Flaming Fire by night* (that they may ſee the their way, yea it ſhall be *a Wall of Fire round*
Zech. 2. 5. *about them*) for upon all the Glory ſhall be a defence: yea God himſelf will be the Glory in the midſt of them; none know the advantages of Praying families, but experienced and Obſervant Chriſtians.

3. This

3. This is the way and means to bring Spiritual and Eternal Salvation to your Houſes: ſurely that was a great word that our Dear Lord ſpoke to Zacheus, *this day is Salvation come to this Houſe*? that little man uſed great care and made an hard ſhift to behold Jeſus, and meat with a bleſſed, unexpected gueſt, that brought him the greateſt Bleſſing, himſelf and Salvation with Him? Our Lord never comes alone, but brings Happineſs with him: the converſion of one man as it was a pledg of his Adoption, ſo it made even [*domum illam ſalutis hæredem*] the whole Family an heir of Heavenly Glory: for (as *Calvin* obſerved) when God adopts the Governour of a Family, he promiſeth to be a God to the whole houſe, and by right Salvation is extended from the head to the whole body: So *Lydia* was baptized and her houſhold, and the Jaylour: *Act.* 16, 15, 33, 34. and oh what joy was produced, when himſelf and his houſe believed! yea *Cornelius* owning God in Family-worſhip, brought to him and his, words, whereby the Maſter and all his houſe ſhould be ſaved: not of Merit but in a Covenant-way, and in anſwer of Prayer: Oh Sirs, would you not have your Children and Servants ſaved? this is Gods appointed way, to bring it about; call in Divine aid, and grace to do that for yours, which you cannot. Luk. 19, 9

4. Family-Worſhip will make up a defect in, or want of publick Ordinances; Providence may caſt your lot in places wherethe ſtreams of the Sanctuary run low,

Nam quia deus dum patrem familias adoptat, toti etiam ejus domui ſe in dium fore promittit jure ſalus a capitt extenditur ad totum corpus: Calv. in loc. Act. 10. 2, 11, 14.

or muddy; in this case house-wells may do you much Service, when publick persecution breaks up Church-assemblys, house-worship will maintain Religion in the World; and that private Fire will break out into an open Flame; what had become of Religion had it not lodged in private houses? this hath been Gods usual reserve to maintain the power of Godliness; Church-History tells us, that the open profession of the Gospel hath run at a low Ebbe, and this hath helped it to a Glorious Resurrection: Ministers were Banished, Assemblies scaterred, Churches demolished, and scarce any appearance of publick Meetings; yet then the fire glowed hot in private hearths, and in God's due time a door was opened for Solemn Assemblies; how much are we beholding to God for House-Altars! and such a day may overtake us again. And suppose you have free liberty of Publick and Powerfull Ordinances, how can you expect a blessing upon them without seeking God for it in your Families! What good will Preaching do without your private instructions, admonitions, councels, prayers? this will inculcate truths, and may lay a foundation for after-godliness; and as Family-Worship is most indisputable, so least unapproachable by the enemy, because oft indiscerneabl; however you may most warrantably suffer for it, if that be God's will, as you heard *Daniel* ventured himself for it to the hungry Lions.

My Beloved Friends what shall I say? what Arguments

Arguments shall I use to perswade you to this duty of Family-Worship? I doubt your Religion is to seek, if you be so loath to set up this Family-Altar, which may consecrate all your Civil and Natural acts and Offices; I will but Pose you with these few Interrogatorys.

1. Suppose a Grave and Pious Minister, or Christian friend lodge with you, would you not for shame reach him a Bible, and desire him to go to Prayer with you lest he should suspect you to be Prayerless at other times? and will not Gods authority and presence have the like influence, and awe upon your Spirits?

2. Suppose your Friends and Relations should quite disown, and disclaim you, unless you would Pray in your Family, would you not make an hard shift to do something that way, rather than be accounted unworthy of Humane Society? and shall that prevail more than God's disclaiming you, or disowning converse with you?

3. If your Landlord should turn you out of your House, or your Father shoud Disinherit you if you set not up this Family-altar, could you be content to suffer both, rather than do it? and shall a threatning of your Father in Heaven, or Great Land-lord, to reject or eject you out of Heaven avail nothing?

4. If a Law were impos'ed upon you to pay five Shillings a time, that you neglect Prayer in your Family, would you forfeit that summe [*toties quoties*] as oft as you go Prayer-

leſs to Bed; and would you not fear that would begger you? and ſhall not greater loſſes and heavier penalties deter you from this Omiſſion?

5. If the King or a Nobleman ſhould promiſe you five Pound a time, that you call your Family together, read a Chapter, Sing a Pſalm, Kneel down and Pray to God, would you not ſtrain hard to procure that Money; and will not a greater profit from the Almighty God prevail with you to perform this excercise to obtain a reward?

6. Suppoſe a Brand were ſet upon your Foreheads like *Cains* Tan, or a dreadfull Trembling ſhould ſeize upon your bodies for ſuch a Neglect, or you ſhould paſs under ſuch a Stigmatizing character as that in *Deut.* 25. 9, 10. *The houſe of him that hath his Shooe looſed:* So if this name be given you, this is a Graceleſs, Prayerleſs man; would not this ſhame you out of this wretched Omiſſion?

7. Suppoſe the next time you go Prayerleſs to Bed, your lovelieſt Child and Darling ſhould be ſnatch't away by a ſudden ſtroak of Death, as it was in *Egypt*, the firſt born of *Pharaoh* and others dyed, and there was a great Cry: would not this move you into better Manners? Oh but a greater evil befalls you, your own precious Souls are endangered by Neglect.

Exo. 11. 56.

8. Suppoſe a Red Croſs, with a [*Lord have Mercy upon Us*] were ſet upon your doors, and the Peſtilence were within your houſe, ſeizing on you, one after another, and you

you had nothing else to do, but to get ready to dye, would you not spend some time in Prayer for your selves and Families? Behold a worse Plague is upon you of Sin, and will you not Pray?

9. Suppose, upon every Omission of Family Prayer you should lose a Limb, or member of your Body, first one finger, then a Toe should be cut or torn off, till all be gone, and you dismembred, would not this force you to this duty? and yet your Precious Souls are in hazard, which are ten thousand times more worthy than a Limb, yea than the whole Body by wilfull Neglect.

10. Suppose a Gallows were set at your door, and you must be hanged thereupon the next time you go out of your door, when you have not Prayed in your Family; would you venture to be hanged rather than omit this duty? do you love your lives no better? Oh! but Eternal death is far more dreadfull, and are Eternal torments, that lake that burneth with fire & Brimstone nothing to you? is the second death easie? and shall not Sinners be damned for their Omission of good, as well as Commission of Evil? Be it known to you, that if you will not do so (*i. e.* as God Commands) Behold *ye have sinned against the Lord*, and be sure your sin will find you out; it will hunt you as a Blood-hound, and haunt you as an evil Spirit in conscience here, and in Torments hereafter: if God said to *Cain* for a defect in his Sacrifice, *if thou doest not well Sin lies at the door*, [i. e. guilt shall be

Rev. 21. 8.

Numb. 32. 23.

Gen. 4. 7.

charged upon thee] and you know how it dog'd him, though he failed but in the manner of it, not acting Faith on Christ, for acceptance; Oh what will become of you that fall short even in the matter also? and do nothing of what God Commands you; yea you think it is a needless ceremony, and mock them that do carefully, constantly and conscientiously perform this duty; wo unto you, if you dye in this Sin you are undone forever.

But one word more, if any offer themselves to be members of particular Churches, and partake of the Lords Supper, I should judge them not fit to be Communicants except they Pray in their Families: and if any be admitted and perform not their duty, I should think them as worthy church-censures, as those that are Idle and omit working in their particular callings, which is injoyned 2*Thes* 3.6,12,14. what censure this is, lesser or greater, whether only withdrawing familiar converse with the offender, or upon obstinacy publick Excommunication, I leave to the judgment of the Learned; But * Dr. *Lightfoot* tells us out of the *Rabbins*, that if any refuse to nourish his children. they must reprove him, make him ashamed, urge him; if he still refuses, they must publickly proclaim in the *Synagogue*, such a one is cruel and will not nourish his children, he is more Cruel than the unclean Fowls, for those nourish their Young ones, and may we not say the same of such as neglect these needfull Family-exercises for the Souls of their's?

* *Si quis renuit liberos suos alere, reprehendunt eum, pudefaciunt eum, urgent eum: Si adhuc renuit, publicè in eum proclamant in Synagoga dicentes, Hic crudelis est, non vult alere liberos suos vel ipsis volucribus immundis crudelior, nam illæ pullos suos alunt* &c Dr. Lightfoot in *Evang: Matthæi Horæ Hebraicæ*, cap. 18. 17. p. 215.

CHAP.

Chap. VII. *Directions how to ſet up an Altar in Families, and how to manage* Family-Worſhip.

I Have now done with perſuaſives to this great Excerciſe of Family-worſhip; whether all that I have ſaid will prevail, I know not; but loath I am, all this ſhould be in vain; it's pitty ſo needfull an Exerciſe ſhould fall to the ground, and all that I have ſaid ſhould riſe up in judgment againſt you. I again renew my motion in the name of the Lord Jeſus: you that are young ſet up your families with God, whatever you have of the World beſide to ſet up with, this will be your treaſure; your *Palladium*, your defence; you cannot miſcarry if you begin with God; you that are old, & have been houſe-keepers long, ſet up this altar, turn over a new leaſe, begin a new life, you are not too old to learn, nor too good to be taught, *better thrive late than never*, though you begin at the eleventh hour, you ſhall not be rejected; Death looks you in the face, look up to God and be ſaved; ſay not, I will go to Hell becauſe I have been long traveling in that road. Be not aſhamed to undoall you have done or miſdone, unravel this confuſed skein; what ſtick you at? Is not the Infinite God worthy of your love? Fear, worſhip? are not the Souls of your Families precious; is not heaven worth your ſeeking, having?

Oh! ſay you, I would fain ſet up an Altar in my Family to the Lord; I would offer him a Sacrifice, and Worſhip God, but I

know not how to set about it, or manage it to any purpose so as may be acceptable to God, profitable to my Family, or comfortable to my own Soul, I Pray you give me some directions on this behalf; I answer that I shall very willingly, but first I do solemnly require your promise to set about it in the name and strength of Christ, and do thy best you can to do it right: my Instructions I shall reduce to two heads.

viz. { 1. Preparatives to it. 2. Management of it.

For the Preparatives to your setting up this Family Altar, I shall but give you these four. 1. See your heads and hearts be well stock't; your heads with sound Knowledge, and your hearts with Saving-Grace: without either of these you'll not be fit for this undertaking; without the former you'll have no skill, without the latter, you'll have no Will to the Work, but go to it as a Bear to the stake. 1. Be sure you get Scripture knowledge, a knowledge of God, the object of worship, of the Mediator by whom only you must have access to the Father, a knowledg of the Holy-Ghost that must help your infirmities, a knowledg of your selves, of Divine Truths, Precepts, Promises; *that the Soul be without knowledg it is not good*, otherwise you will Worship you know not what, or you care not how, or regard not why; you'll degenerate into Formality and Superstition; it's worth nothing, what you find in *Isa.* 19. having told us of an *Altar* in ver. 19. he tells us

Prov. 19. 2.

of

of a *Sacrifice* ver. 22, but betwixt thoſe he ſaith, that the Lord ſhall be known to *Egypt*, yea and the *Egyptians* ſhall know the Lord in that day; and ſhall do *Sacrifice* and Oblation, by *Altar* is meant *Goſpel-Worſhip*, by a *Pillar at the Border of it*, is meant, *a Monument of the True Religion*, betokening Evidences of their Piety in all places, but without the true knowledg of God in Chriſt, they will ſet up the *Athenian Altar*, *To the Unknown God*? and therefore it's ſaid, that the Lord ſhall be known to *Egypt*, in the Goſpel-Publication, and not only ſo, but the *Egyptians* ſhall know the Lord; Savingly, Sincerely, Senſibly, Experimentally (for words of ſenſe denote affection and practice) then and never till then will they be fit to offer an Oblation; for if men offer the blind for Sacrifice is it not Evil? and if the offerer be blind and Ignorant, is not he Evil? will God accept ſuch a perſon? what cares God for mens Ignorant Devotions? if there be no knowledg of God in the Land, there's no Mercy nor Truth: for ſaving knowledg is the door and window to let in Saving Grace. Act. 17.23. Mal. 1. 8. Hoſ. 4. 1.

2. You muſt allo have a ſaving Principle of Grace in your hearts, a bowed Will, a renewed Conſcience, Sanctified affections, a Soul ſet with a byas Heaven-wards, that you may delight in the Law of God, *after the inward man* and may Worſhip God *in Spirit and in Truth*, elſe your Praying will be but canting, your labour will be but lip labour, and ſo loſt labour, all your Piety will be but Hypocriſie, Rom. 7.22. Joh. 4. 24.

pocrisie, and your hearts will not be ingaged in it, then you will be heartless in setting about it, and soon weary of it, without union to Christ; you can do nothing, see then
Eph. 3. 17. that Christ dwell in your hearts by Faith;
1 Joh. 4. 16. that's the Mistical Bond that you be united to him by love, that's the Moral Bond and Ligament, from that Spring flow Holy desires, delight in God; fear of God; repentance, Humility, Self-denyal, Zeal, and all other Graces, without which you will be but cold Worshipers of God; Set up with something within, or you are Formalists at best. But you'll say, how shall we get this principle of Grace? I answer, you must be convinced, that you have it not by Nature, that you can-
Eph. 2. 8. not work it in your own hearts, for *Faith is*
2 Cor. 13. 5. *the gift of God*, you must examine your selves whether Faith be in you, you must study and
Jer. 31. 33, 34. plead the Covenant of Grace, wherein God
Deut. 30. 6. promiseth to *put his Law in your inward parts*, to teach you to know him, to circumcise your hearts to love him, to put his fear in
Jer. 32. 40. Ezek. 36. 26, 27. your hearts; to *put his Spirit into you, and a new Spirit within you*; and by studying and pleading these pretious Promises you may be
2 Pet. 1. 4. partakers of the Divine nature, that you may serve the Lord in a new and due manner.

2. Another Preparative to this Family-Altar, is the due aud regular constitution of Families: which consists in a Solemn choice of Family Relations, Governours of Families must be very cautious herein that are a going to set up Families; 'tis true, Children are

are neceſſary parts thereof and perſons muſt take theſe as God ſends them, they are not Elective, or of our choice, but there are ways appointed by God to make them good, but that I meddle not with at preſent; it is ſuch as are arbitrary or within our power to make choice of; as Wives and Servants, the firſt inferiours or aſſiſtants in Families, theſe may be a great furtherance or hinderance to an Houſe-holder in the Excerciſe of Religion.

1. When you are to chooſe a Wife, be very ſhy and carefull, *Be not unequally Yoked together with Unbelievers*, leſt it come to paſs, that when you draw one way, ſhe draws another: when you would Pray in your Family, ſhe be buſie about the World, and will not joyn with you, but act the part of Scoffing *Michal*, who jeer'd her holy Husband *David* for his fervent Zeal to Gods Worſhip in Dancing before the Ark; Oh what grief of heart will this be to you that muſt be forced to turn your ſweet communion with, into a ſevere admonition of your own Wife! and the nearer the Relation the heavier the affliction; when your Wife proves a tempting *Eve*, or as *Solomons* Wives *who turned away his heart from God*; Oh! the danger of Seduction, but if not ſo, yet a bad wife will be a continual vexation, like a conſtant dropping in a very rainy day; you little know the inconveniences attending ſuch a Relation; you'll ſay, how can we help it? I anſwer, Prudence, Prayer, and due conſider-

2Cor.6.14.

2Sam.6.20.

1Kin. 11.2, 3,4.

ation

ation before-hand may ordinarily Prevent such a bad choice; if you make it your
1Cor. 7.39. buſineſs to *Marry in the Lord*, and Yoke only with ſuch an one as bears Chriſt's Yoke, conſulting Chriſtian Friends, renouncing Carnal Ends in your Choice, as Beauty, Portion, Parentage, but be ſure of grounded hopes of Saving Grace in the firſt place; let Religion and Reaſon, not Luſt or Fancy make your choice, leſt you ſmart for your Folly; Oh what an help may a Prudent Gracious Wife be in aſſiſting you in ſetting up this Family-Altar; *a Wiſe Woman buildeth*
Pro 14. 1. *her Houſe*, Manoahs Wife incouraged her
Judg. 13. Husband, and *Rachel* and *Leah* builded the
23. houſe of *Jacob* or *Iſrael*: *Hanna* Prayed
Ruth. 4. 11. while her Husband *Elkanah* Sacrificed, and
1Sam. 1. 3, no doubt joyned with him devoutly at home;
10, 13. Oh what a bleſſed harmony to ſee Husband
1Pet. 3. 7. and Wife *heirs together of the Grace of Life*, that their Prayers may not be hindred, but mutually furthered! this plainly intimates that unſuitableneſs of Spirit, or untowardneſs in either hinders Prayers, *i. e.* either diverts them from Praying, or ſpoils the efficacy of Prayer; therefore let Young men be Wiſe in this main concern of chooſing a Wife, for who would fetch Water to kindle Fire, as one ſaith, or a Bed of Snow to keep one Warm? you have quench-coals enough now within, eſpouſe not more, rather get Bellows to kindle your Spark. 2. As for Servants, be Serious and cautious in chooſing godly ones; if it be poſſible chooſe godly

Servants:

Servants: truſt not to your care and pains to make them ſo; if *Oneſimus* be begot in Bonds, he will be profitable to his Godly Maſter *Philemon*; there's no truſting Carnal Servants, they will but comply out of awe, & may degenerate into Atheiſm; If thy Servant be upright, he will not only Pray when thou prayeſt, which will make a bleſſed harmony, but will Pray alone for thee and as Godly *Eliezer* did in his Maſters buſineſs, and then things will ſucceed well; for (as one ſaith) a Praying Servant, will not only work, but ſet God a work: Oh happy Family where Servants Eccho to their Maſters Sighs! theſe will unanimouſly beſiege Heaven with importunate groans: yea let carnal *Laban* and *Potiphar* ſpeak as they find, and they will affirm that God hath bleſſed them for *Jacob* and *Joſephs* ſakes. But you little know the hurt you may have, and Children alſo by graceleſs Servants. This was *Davids* purpoſe and endeavour to have men faithfull to God, to be houſe-fellows with him, and to baniſh from him froward Perſons, Proud, Slanderers, Apoſtates, Deceitful Liars, and wicked doers; and if you'll ſerve God comfortably in your Families, you muſt imitate Pious Example.

Philem. 10. 11.

Gen. 24. 12.

Gen. 30. 27 c. 39. 5.

Pſa. 101. 38.

3. Dedicate your houſes to the Lord; ſo did Gods ſervants of old, when they had built a new houſe they dedicated it, *Deut.* 20. 5. when they had been baniſhed from it, and were reſtored, they again dedicated it as *David* did, when *Abſalom* had polluted it: we read alſo of a man *ſanctifying his houſe to be*

Pſal. 30.

1 Cor. 4. 11. *be Holy unto the Lord* Lev. 27. 14. this must be done, by Praising God for houses to dwell in, all have not this Mercy, some choice Saints have had no certain dwelling place: others have wandred in Deserts, Mountains, Heb. 11. 28. Dens and caves, of whom the world was not Mat. 8. 20. worthy: yea our dear Lord himself had not not where to lay his head? and who are we that God should honour us with convenient habitations? It becomes us to own him as our chief Landlord, and resolve by God's assistance to pay our chief rent to him, and Prov. 3. 9. *Honour the Lord with our substance and all that we have*: we must thank God that we have 1 Cron. 29. any thing to give back again to him; for *all* 10,—14. *things come of him, and of his own we give him*; Psal. 119. we must first give our selves to the Lord, as 38, 94, 106. devoted to his Fear, Service, Worship: as we must not be content with what God gives us, except he give us himself, no more will God be content with what we give him, without giving our selves to him: then let us give him our Children, Servants, so far as we are able: Be earnest with him in Prayer for a Blessing on all we are or have; let us plead the Gen. 32. 9, Covenant and promises for our Selves and 10. ours, as Holy *Jacob* did; observe the word of precept for our Warrant to dwell in our houses, promises for our incouragement, and act according to rule, and the best patterns, that we will walk within our house with a Psal. 101. 2. *Perfect heart*, that we will use all we have to Gods Glory and the good of his Church; Act. 16. 15. that we will entertain Christ's Embassadors

in

in our houſes, as *Lydia* and the Jaylor did: that we will read Scriptures, inſtruct our Families, Sing *Pſalms*, continue inſtant in Family and Cloſet-Prayer, that all the rooms of our houſe may be ſeaſoned; if you thus begin with good, you lay a good foundation, and may groundedly hope the preſence of God will be with you, and with your Families.

4. Order your Families aright, as there muſt be diſcipline in the Church which is a fence to Doctrine and Worſhip, *beholding*, Col. 2. 5. ſaith the Apoſtle, *your order and the ſtedfaſtneſs of your Faith*, ſo it is in Families, if the Maſter have by groſſe Sin, Paſſion, Pride, too much Lenity, or Imprudent Behaviour forfeited his Autority, or by Tyranny have abuſed it, that he become Contemptible, he ſhall hardly keep up Family-Worſhip, Children or Servants will be ready to laugh him to ſcorn, as not able to rule himſelf, therefore little fit to rule others, and think they have good reaſon to ramble abroad, and will be under no government; and will come none to Prayers; this is their Sin, but there hath been too much occaſion given by their Weak or Wilfull Governours; therefore I adviſe that you maintain your Authority, and uſe it for God. Looſe not the reins of Government, yet ſweeten it with Love: when Love Oyles the Wheels, and lines the Yoke, Government becomes amiable and attractive to Duty; when *David* ſaid, hear my Brethren, it chained his Subjects to him, but when *Rehoboam*

Rehoboam answered roughly, it deterred them from him: Rule in love and they will obey in love: if you shew good will to their
Eph. 5. 7, 9. Souls, with good-will they will do you Service, as to the Lord Holiness begets awfulness; tenderness produceth Ingenuous Subjection; Humility maintains authority more than domineering rigour; let it appear you rule your Familes under God, and for God: I confess this Theam is more proper to the next subject of the Regal or Magistratical power of House-holders, whither I remit it; yet a word or two, as due order and government doth promote Gods Worship; Be sure that every member in your Family know and keep in their posts and places, that there be no interfeiring or Envy: and see that every one order their business both within doors and without, that they attend Family-Prayer; and see you do not overcharge them with so much business as to render them uncapable, either by unseasonable attendance on their Secular concern, forcing them to be absent, or by over-tiring them, that they are fitter to lye down in their Beds, than to fall down on their Knees and lift up their Hearts to God in Prayer; learn to or-
Psal. 112. 5. der your affairs with *Discretion*: Let every Work know it's time, and every one know his work; that confusion may not shut out Religion; Order Facilitates any business: prevents impediments, produceth good Success; I know some Families cannot ordinarily be reduced to such a good order as some others,

others; but if Governours were prudent to contract their Worldly buſineſs into a leſs compaſs, or wiſely forecaſt for it, though their Families be numerous, and buſineſs urgent, they might do much this way: Oh be not greedy of gain to trouble your own houſe: cumber not your ſelves or yours with *many things*, but mind the *one thing needful*. Pſal. 10.42. Be ſure you maintain Religion whatever you do; *give unto God the things that are Gods*: learn to divide the hoof aright, that the World incroach not upon Gods due, or rob him of his right: if you part Religion from your calling, it's meer Heatheniſm; if you part your particular callings from Religion, it becomes Enthuſiaſm? joyn them together, and they will be mutually helpful to each other, and to you in a due purſuit of both: change of imployments will make both a diverſion, a Pleaſing Recration; obſerve the Apoſtles rule: *Brethren let every man wherein he is called therein abide with God*; 1 Cor. 7. 24. Let your Condition, Station, Relation be what it will, ingage God to be with you, beſpeak his preſence by Prayer, and beſprinkle all your Civil Actions with Religious Excerciſes.

Chap. VIII. *Directions how to manage the worship of God in Families, as to the matter of Prayer.*

I Have briefly dispatcht the preparatives for Erecting and managing Family Worship, in a due order; I now proceed more closely to the carrying on of this work Solemnly, that you may please, Glorify and injoy God, profit and edify your selves and others in this undertaking; in which I propose two sorts of instructions; Which do

Concern { 1. Matter. 2. Manner. } of managing Family Worship.

1. For matter, or words in Family-Prayer. the Holy-Ghost saith, *take with you words,* Hos. 14. 2. *and turn to the Lord; say unto him, take away all Iniquity, and receive us Graciously* — by *words*, he means not only Phrases, or literal expressions. for therein Hypocrites may abound, but, 1. The subject Matter to be treated upon, as *Joab* put *words* into the Wo- 2Sam. 14. 3. mans Mouth; *i. e.* the main purport, design, or manner of her Similitude. not every Syllable she spoke: 2. Practise accordingly, keep the law; act as real Saints, for the ten Commandments are called [דְּבָרִים] *words*, and our compliance therewith must answer our professions, and prayers; Else we do nothing; we must live up to our prayers; the word also signifies an ordering, regulating and Marshalling a thing, and indeed we cannot order our *Words* before him, by reason of darkness, therefore must we be very Cautious and exact,

Ebræi eâdem voce exprimunt verba et res, quia verba debent esse realia, et homine digna præsertim apud Deum. vid. Pol. crit in loc.

act, as the wise man admoniſheth, *Eccl.*5.2. *Be not raſh with thy Mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty to utter any thing before God, for God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy* words *be few, i. e.* Well weighed in Prayer or vows, God is of Infinite Majeſty not to be deſpiſed, of Tranſcendent Holineſs not to be offended, and of unſearchable Knowledge not to be deceived; nor to be flattered with vain Repetitions; ſtudy not to ſpeak fine but fit words, not many but weighty, proceeding from thy heart, directed unto God and pertinent to the matter in hand. 4. *Words* may ſignify Arguments in Prayer, So *Job* 6. 25. *how forcible are right words* (i. e. Proper Arguments, as appears from the later clauſe) *but what doth your arguing reprove?* accordingly holy *Job* wiſheth, *Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come near to his Seat! I would order my Cauſe before him, and fill my Mouth with Arguments*; not to out-argue God, or to prove him unjuſt, no nor to move God to that which he is unwilling to, for *he is in one mind, and who can turn him?* No, he is Righteous and Unchangable, I dare not deal with God, or challenge him to deal with me upon terms of ſtrict juſtice, but upon terms of new Covenant-Grace, pleading his promiſe made to Sinners in Chriſt, and ſoliciting for performance of them. Job. 23.34. ver. 13.

And now I proceed to help Houſe-holders in the matter of their Family-Worſhip, particularly in Prayer, I ſhall produce ſome

Stones out of the Word of God for rearing this Family-Altar, and the rather becauſe this is a general complaint, and was a principall objection, that they knew not what to ſay if they ſhould kneel down in their houſes with their Families: but to ſuch as are willing but weak in their addreſſes to the throne of Grace, I ſhall ſubjoyn theſe two inſtructions for their help.

1. Attend upon a powerfull Miniſtry: there you will hear Directions, Motives, Precepts, Promiſes, Scripture-Arguments to quicken and direct you in this work: there you may gain knowledge of God the object of Worſhip, Chriſt the Mediator and Advocate, of the Holy-Ghoſt that muſt aſſiſt you: there you will get a good underſtanding in Gods mind and will, which will furniſh you with abilities, and further your acquaintance with God; *Happy is the man that findeth Wiſdom, and the man that getteth underſtanding*: that man is prepared to every good work: But how ſhall a Soul obtain this ſacred underſtanding? I anſwer, one way is by the ear; as he loſt true wiſdom by abuſing that ſenſe, and hearkening to the *Syren* Songs of the ſubtile Serpent: ſo the Scriptures frequently calls you to hearken to the voice of God in the Miniſtry of the Word: Light and Life, and Love may come in at that door; *Hear and your Souls ſhall live*; *Faith comes by hearing*; yea men may receive the Spirit *by the hearing of Faith*. But how ſhall men breath without Spiritual Life? and how can men

Prov. 3. 13.

Iſa. 55. 3.
Rom. 10. 17.
Gal. 3. 2.

Pray

Pray without the assistance of the Spirit? *how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a Preacher?* nor is it any kind of preacher that you must hear, but you must take heed whom you hear, that they be sent, *i. e.* duely qualified and regularly Commissionated: you must take heed what you hear, that it be not mens fancys, but the approved word of the Living God; you must also take heed how you hear: alas! any kind of hearing will not serve turn: you must Pray and prepare before you hear it; set your selves in Gods presence, cast out all Sin, apply it to your selves, mix it with Love, own Gods Authority in it; hide it in your hearts, meditate on it, resolve upon the practice of it: and who can tell what blessed fruits it may produce in your hearts and lives? Pray you *that the word may have free course, and be Glorified*; and if it be so in you, the fruit of Preaching will appear in your Prayers as well as Practices: an heart *opened* to the *Word*, will *open the Mouth wide in Prayer:* But if you will not hearken to Gods voice, you will have no voice to God, nor will God regard what you say; for *He that turneth away his Ear from hearing the law, even his Prayer shall be abomination.* Rom. 10. 14. 2 Thes. 3. 1. Psal. 81. 10, 11. Prov. 28. 9.

2. *Search the Scriptures*: this is both the Rule and Matter of Prayer: if you be mighty in the Scriptures, you will be mighty and pithy in Prayer: God loves to be spoken to in Joh. 5. 39.

his own language: ſtudy Scripture-Precepts, & turn them into Prayers, ſtudy Scripture-Promiſes, and turn them into Pleas, ſtudy Scripture-Threatnings and turn them into deprecations, and ſtudy Scripture-Patterns for imitation: you may find ſeveral excellent Prayers in the Bible, as of *Abraham* Gen. 18. 23, 32. So *Jacob*, Gen. 32. 9, 12. *Moſes*, Exod. 32. 11-13. So *Joſhua*, 7. 6, 9 *Hanna*, 1 Sam. 1. 11. *Solomon*, 1 Kings, 3. 6, 9. 8. 22-53. *David*, 1 Chron. 17. 16, 27. *Neh.* 1. 4, 11. *Ezra*, 9. *Dan.* 9. And many ſweet Prayers put up and recorded by the bleſſed Apoſtle *Paul*, and others, too many to be mentioned, which in reading the Holy Scriptures you may meet with; Say not then, you have nothing to ſay before the Lord; it is your Ignorance or Negligence, if you be barren in your addreſſes to the throne of Grace: ſome good Devines have propoſed a method and words in Scripture-phraſe, which I will not now trouble you with; but if you daily uſe to read the Bible, you will find patt expreſſions flowing into your mind in Prayer, which will prove pertinent matter upon all occaſions; when you read Scripture, think now God is ſpeaking to me, and thereby furniſhing me with matter to ſpeak to him in Prayer; this paſſage ſuits my caſe, I will improve it in Confeſſion, Petition, Deprecation or Thanksgiving in my addreſſes to God, and thus you will arrive to an habit of free-converſing with God; and it becomes Governours of families to be more imployed in reading

reading Scriptures than others, so God appoints Kings, Captains, Ministers, to be daily exercised in this duty: because they were to be helpfull to others; so must you; if you consult with Gods word, you *go in unto God*, so some observe by comparing, *Psal.* 73. 17. of *going into the Sanctuary of God*, with 2 *Sam.* 7. 18, *then went King* David *in, and sate before the Lord.* i. e. *he went in to God*: to intimate that Reading and Praying are near a kin: the one is an help to the other: if you read much, it will help you to Pray much, it will help you to read and understand. Be much imployed in both.

Deu. 17. 19. Josh. 1 8. 1 Tim. 4. 14.

3. Learn to understand and improve the *Lords Prayer*, Mat. 6. 9. 12. Consider the Prologue, Parts, and Conclusion of it: get some Succinct and plain Exposition of it, do not Cantingly, Formally, and Superstitiously blubber it over, as a Charm, but use it as a Comprehensive Platform of Praying: I am not altogether against the use of the words in the Lords Prayer: Nay I would rather you kneel down with your Family, and said nothing but the Lords Prayer, than that you should use no Prayer at all: only see you understand the meaning of it? and do not rabble it over as a Parrot, but do it seriously; and take heed of Mocking God: Hypocrisie is a sin as well as Atheism: to pray otherwise than Christ hath taught, is not only Ignorance, but a gievous sin, saith an Ancient; * this referrs both to the matter and manner of praying, *for*, saith he. *the Father*

* *Aliter orar quam docui non ignoran tia Solaest, sed et Culpa.* Cyprian *Serm. 6. orat. Domin. et cum ipsu habeamus a pud hatre Advocatu pro peccati nostris, A vocati nos verba prom mus, id. ib.*

ther will acknowledge the words of his Son, when we Pray to him, in his name: [qui habitat intus in pectore, ipse sit et in voce] let him be in our voice that dwells in our hearts; [*quia Deus non vocis, sed cordis auditor est*] God is not the hearer of the voice but of the heart. But we are now speaking of Family-Prayer, wherein God requires both voice and heart; and I am giving helps for the matter of Prayer, and this is a certain truth, that all and only the things that are to be asked of God are comprehended in the Lords Prayer; that's the summe and substance of the [*petenda*] things to be asked: if you do not always utter the words, you must express the Sense; therefore it's fit you should understand them; for every word hath it's weight; [*Our Father which art in Heaven*] thou art the common Father of all Mankind, our Father in Christ. we humbly and reverently prostrate our Selves at thy Footstool, in confidence of entertainment, through thy well-beloved Son and our Advocate: give us child-like affections to thee, and endeared love to all thine, and tender Compassion to all others! [*Hallowed be thy name,*] let thy Glorious Titles, Attributes, Word and Ordinances be manifested through the World, dispose all things to the Glory of thy name, assist us in our confessing and forsaking our Sins, adoring thine infinite perfections, believing in thee, subjecting our selves to thee, attending on thee, and aiming at thy Glory in all we are, or do, or suffer.

[*Thy*

[*Thy Kingdom come*] deſtroy O Lord, the Devils kingdom of Ignorance, Wickedneſs, advance thy Kingdom in Converting Sinners, building thy Church, maintaining the power of Godlineſs, and haſtning the Kingdom of Glory, confirming and preparing our own Souls for our Lords ſecond coming; [*Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven,*] let thy preceptive Will be our rule, enable us to comply with it, give us knowledge of it, conquer the enmity of our ſtubborn wills, enable us to do it ſingly, Sincerely, Univerſally and conſtantly, as Angels and Saints Glorified; help us quietly to acquieſce in thy Providential will, be it for us or againſt us; [*Give us this day our daily bread*] vouchafe to us a competent portion of outward Comforts, for our daily ſupply, thy bleſſing therewith, which is the ſtaff of our bread, for we depend on thee for all: [*Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*] for Chriſt's ſake and ſatisfaction Pardon all our Sins; whereby we are endebted to divine Juſtice, and can never ſatisfie, but lay hold by Faith on the Lord our Righteouſneſs, and freely forgive all men their offences againſt us, and Pray God to forgive them: [*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from Evil*] Lord we have bad Herds, prevent occaſions of Sin, reſtrain the tempter, keep us out of harms way, or make us conqerours of World, Fleſh, and Devil; let not Sin have Dominion over us! [*For thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory*

Glory, for Ever, Amen.] We take not our incouragement in our Prayers from any thing in our Selves, but from Thee who art the only Soveraign All-sufficient God, able and willing to help poor Creatures; to thee only be ascribed all Dominion, Blessing, Honour, Glory and Power, for evermore, Amen, So be it.

Thus I have given you a short hint of the meaning of this Excellent Prayer, that you may be left without excuse for your willful Neglect.

4. Frequent Christian Society; converse with Godly Praying persons, this will help you in Family Work and Worship, not only as it is a good Example, but as it assimilates you to them, and also as it provokes to an holy Emulation, it will make you shame with your selves, that such as had no better breeding or higher Education than you, have yet attained to such Knowledge, Gifts and Elocution; this will make you admire the Grace of God in them, and think it not impossible, but that the same Grace may do as much in you. *Paul* sought by the Gentiles Piety to provoke the *Jews* to Emulation, and tells us the *Corinthians* zeal (in Charitable contribution) had provoked very many: it's not to tell what Light and Life, and Love may be conveyed from one Christian to another: If two lye together they have heat; Iron sharpens Iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his Friend: they say Bores whett their Tusks one against another; and the

Rom. 11. 12.
2 Cor. 9. 2.
Eccl. 49. 12.
Pro. 27. 17.
A bove majori discit arte nostra.

the younger Oxe learns to Plow of the elder: wicked men do exaſperate one another: So muſt, ſo will God's Children conſider one another, to provoke unto Love and to good works: [παροξυσμον] it's a word borrowed from Phyſicians, who deſcribe a violent Feaver by this word, which imports that at ſome times the Fit is ſo ſtrong, as to make the Body to tremble, the Bed to ſhake under the Patient: The ſame word uſed of the *Contention* or Paroxiſm betwixt *Paul* and *Barnabas*: Only this is of Love, that was of Anger; ſtriving which ſhould exceed in Zeal for God, from the ſenſe of Chriſt's Love to them; outſtripping one another in heavenly motions: However, if you frequently converſe in the Societies of praying Chriſtians, you will be acquainted with their expreſſions, which you may make uſe of, ſo you have experience thereof, and your hearts be joyned therewith, and ſuited thereto; and their phraſes becoming yours, you will be more fit for Family-duty. Heb. 10. 24. Act. 15. 39.

5. Converſe with God alone: firſt Pray in your Cloſets, and then you'll be more inabled to Pray in your Families, both as to Matter and Manner: a frequent exerciſe of Cloſet-prayer will move you to converſing with God: there you will find that God will ſuggeſt Words into your minds, which you may produce in your Families with your Mouths, and this courſe will imbolden you before others: and poſſibly this is one part of Gods rewarding Cloſet-prayer openly which

Mat. 6. 6. which our Lord promiseth. Thus saith *Eli-*
Job 22. 21, *phas*, to *Job*, *acquaint now thy self with him*
26, 27. (i e *with God*) *and as one of the blessed Fruits of Familiarity, thou shalt lift up thy Face unto God*, (*i. e.*) thou shalt openly own him before others without Sinful modesty or blushing, as a Man dare boldly approach his in-
2 Cor. 3. 18. timate Friend (whoever be present;) he adds also, *thou shalt make thy Prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee.*—Oh the blessed Fruits of a Souls acquaintance with God in a Corner! such will not be ashamed of him before others, such shall resemble God; this Intimacy Transforms men into his likeness, as long intimate acquaintance hath altered the Habit of some mens bodies and disposition of their Minds into that of their friends, *Moses* conversing with God in the Mount
Exo. 34. 30. made his Face shine, so that some Rays of Divine Glory appeared to *Aaron* and the *Israelites*; the more you are with God, the more you have of God, and this of Praying with boldness, confidence, and assurance is both a Duty and Priviledge, obtained by frequent conversing with God as our friend: But the manner of the expression is worth
שַׁחַר nothing [*thou shalt make thy Prayer to him*:] the Words are Emphatical, and signifie, a pouring out of Prayer, with Multitude of Words in Prayer, strong Words, clothed with Power: you will never want Matter, or Words, or inlargedness, if you be thus acquainted with God: your Family will soon take notice that you have been with

Multiplicavit proprie verba fortia fudit in oratione.

Jesus

Jesus in a corner, when they discern such freedom of Speech and Spirit, yea, no body can hinder you from Praying with your Family; one Act of Religion draws on another, secret Duties prepare for more publick; and 'tis true, what Dr. *Preston* observes, that helps to Religion are within the compass of Religion, multiplyed Acts strengthen habits, by running men learn to run, by writing they learn to write: so by Praying you will best learn to Pray.

6. Study the Nature of Sin, see what a Scriptural discovery you can make of the Sin of Nature and Nature of Sin, the kinds, degrees, circumstances, aggravations of Sin, together with the doleful effects and consequences of it, in this and another World; this will help you in Confession, self-accusation, and deep Humiliation, which is a considerable part of Prayer; This Self-knowledge helps both in the Matter and manner of Praying. 2. Chron. 6. 29. *What Prayer or supplication shall be made of any Man, or of all thy People of* Israel, *when every one shall know his own Sore, and his own Grief*— Psal. 38. 9. Sorrow makes eloquent, you need not prompt a necessitous Beggar; he hath Words at will, and shews his Sores, which is powerful Oratory; if Sin were your burden, it would squeeze out Sighs and Groans, and a Groan is a good Prayer; *Lord my desire is before thee and my Groaning is not hid from thee*, and if there be inward Sighs there will be outward Speeches, if you be full of Griefs,

you

Job 32. 18, 19, 20 you will be full of complaints, if you be full of Matter—it will make you burſt like new bottles; and you will ſpeak that you may be refreſhed: conſult the Book of Conſcience, and you will find it eaſy to draw up a large bill of Indictment againſt your own Souls.

7 Study your wants, need makes beggers, and adds Spurs to Prayers, learn of poor Beggers at the Door, Malefactors at the Barr, conſider your own Indigency, the caſe of your Families, Congregations, the Nation; is there no unconverted Sinner in your Family, is there no Sin breaking out amongſt you; is there no Grace weak or wanting in your ſelf or yours? Is there no Temptation aſſaulting any of you? or no affliction, or Judgment incumbent on you, or impendent over you? look and look again, as you uſe to make an inſpection into your Stock, when you go to the Market to make proviſion: follow the Lord importunately for a crum of Mercy, as the *poor Woman* in the Goſpel, Mat. 15. 27. Luk. 18. 3. verſe 13. or as the *importunate Widow*, or if you can ſay no more, ſay as the Publican, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*, the Lord be merciful to my poor Sinning Family, who knows what prevalency may be in ſuch a Word uttered from an humble ſenſe of Soul-wants? you know that Man went to his Houſe juſtified rather than the vaunting vainglorious Phariſee.

8. Make a Catalogue of your mercies, recollect the kindneſs of God, Perſonal, Domeſtical, both in Temporals and Spirituals:

als: it's true, they are so many that they cannot be declared in order, *they are more than can be numbred*: but let that not discourage you in your attempt (no more than reckoning up your Sins, which are also innumerable) but do what you can in both, if you cannot do what you would or ought, the more you endeavour the more will be suggested to your Memory. and so the more will be matter of praise and thankfulness for renewed Mercy every day, and as you find any signal Mercies, set up an *Eben-ezer*, and say, *hitherto hath the Lord helped us*, you will experience multiplied occasions of such Memorials, speak good of God in conference, and call in the help of others *to magnifie the Lord with you*, and perhaps the members of your Family will bring every one a Stone to raise the pile of praise to an higher pitch, yea and bring their Coal to warm your hearts together, and kindle a greater Flame of heavenly devotion; try this course, and you'll see the blessed issue.

Psal. 40. 5. Verse 12. 1 Sam. 7. 12. Psal. 34. 3.

9. Consider what dangers you are daily incident to, and see if that will not afford you matter of Prayer, possibly some of your Callings expose you to greater hazards than ordinary, some ride much abroad early and late to Markets, and are subject to falls; some work under ground and may be crusht to death, others go to Sea and see the wonder of the Lord in the deep, and it hath been said, *he that knows not how to Pray, let him go to Sea*; there is no Calling but it hath its

Qui nescit orare, discat navigare.

its Snares and difficulties, which it exposeth Persons to; and Wisdom is profitable to direct, foreseen Dangers least hurt: for as Persons are forewarned, at least, it affords Matter of Deprecation. But there are thousands of accidents that the most sagacious eye cannot foresee, which you see others fall into and fall by, one falls into a Pit and perisheth, another, his Horse falls, and he breaks an Arm, or Leg, or his Neck, others are assaulted by Robbers and Slain, others are burnt by sudden Fires in their Houses; your own observation may afford you many sad Instances, and what befalls others may befall you, and may not these afford you matter of Prayer, for their prevention, or your preparation for them, put your selves into Gods hands every Morning and Evening, for you are never safe but under his Tuition, the Omniscient Omnipotent God can only guard you and your Family,

Psa. 121. 4. 227. 1, 2. *He that keepeth* Israel *neither slumbers nor sleepeth*, other means are ineffectual without him.

Zech. 12. 10 10. Beg Gods Holy Spirit: It is a Spirit of Grace and Supplication, go to God in the name of Christ and if you can say nothing else, yet tell him you cannot Pray, but withall say, *Lord I hear others can Pray, why not I?* No matter how dull the Schollar is, so I have thee for my Master, I hear others of mean gifts Naturally, are yet instructed Spiritually, and have arrived to great dexterity in managing Family-Worship, and may

may not I be endowed with the ſame Spirit, firſt of Sanctification, and then of Supplication? come Lord and teach me to Pray as *John* taught his Diſciples, or rather as *Jeſus* teacheth his Members, thou ſaiſt, *if ye being evil know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* I know this is an hard Text, but it muſt not be underſtood, as if God would give his Sanctifying Spirit to a carnal mans Prayer, by vertue of a promiſe, but either common gifts of the Spirit to ſuch, or further degrees of the Spirit to his own Children, and ſo I think it is to be taken as the Pledge and earneſt of the Holy Spirit to Sanctified Souls, as *Calvin* takes it; as being one of the good things of the kingdom of Heaven? Which Godly Souls moſt importunately ask and beg for; and you ſee here a free and faithful promiſe of Chriſt, that his and our Father will beſtow his Holy Spirit on us, and the Bleſſed Apoſtle tells us the advantage of the Holy Spirit for our aſſiſtance in prayer, *Rom. 8. 26. likewiſe alſo the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we ſhould Pray for as we ought, &c.* All acknowledge that the Spirit muſt help our infirmities in the manner of right Praying, exciting Graces and Holy affections and knitting our thoughts to God: But the great queſtion is whether the Holy Ghoſt dictates to Gods Children matter or expreſſion in Prayer. I think the Text is clear that it doth: For the Text ſaith not

Luk. 11. 1. v. 13.

Jubemur quidem pulſare, ſed nemo Sponte præditari vel unam Syllabam petuit, niſi arcano Spiritus ſui inſtinctu nos Deus pulſit, adeoque ſibi corda noſtra aperiat, Cal. *in loc.*

that we know not how to pray, but *what we ſhould pray for as we ought*; hence a Schoolman ſaith [*Difficillimum eſt ſcire quid ſit deſiderandum*] it's moſt difficult to know what is to be deſired; a Godly man knows the end Gods Glory, and the injoyment of him, but unleſs the Spirit teach him he will miſs it in the means, and as our Saviour ſaith, *ask*
Mat. 20. 22. *they know not what*, as we have ſome inſtances
Luk. 9. 54, 55. in Scripture, and many ſad experiments in our ſelves, and though the Lords Prayer be a
Joh. 6. 8, 9. Jonah 4. 3. rule in general, yet we may be to ſeek in particulars except the Spirit bring things into our thoughts, and often ſuggeſt Scripture expreſſions to our Memorys, in earneſt and perinent Pleading with the Lord; the Spirit inlightens us in our Ignorance, aſſiſts us in our weakneſs, reſolves us in our doubtings, Comforts us in our Sadneſs, Quickens us in our Deadneſs, Compoſeth us in our diſtractions; Oh! therefore ſue out this bleſſed Advocate within, which will make Interpellation in our Hearts, as Chriſt makes interceſſion at Gods right hand, and then you Pray acceptably. But God hears no Language but that of his Spirit; yet God's Spirit makes interceſſion by helping God's people to intercede, it Prays, by helping us to Pray, not as *Arrians* imagine that the Holy-Ghoſt is below the Son, as ſupplicating the Son, or that the Son is leſs than the Father, as ſupplicating the Father, which is a groſſe miſtake; for Chriſt intercedes for us, by the vertue of his merit, with the Father,

Spiritus interpellat faciendo nos interpellare, orat faciendo nos orare, clamat faciendo nos clamare: videſis Pareum in loc.

ther, the Holy-Ghoſt by helping us to cry *Abba Father*, Gal. 4. 6. Let none Imagin that this is an *Enthuſiaſtick* fancy, or a miraculous gift (as *Chryſoſtom* thought) no, nor a Melancholy dream; they that have any ſolid experience in the things of God, know that the aſſiſtance of the Spirit in Prayer is the greateſt reality in the World; nor was it a temporary gift, but a permanent Grace abiding with the Church for Ever: Enabling even private Chriſtians to Pray in the Spirit; and in the Holy-Ghoſt; yet differently, as God ſees good, ſometimes more inlarging their hearts, and at other times withdrawing his Influences; but it becomes us to embrace its Motions, and Pray earneſtly for it. Thus much for helps to the matter of Prayer.

Joh. 14. 16. Eph. 6. 18. Jude 20.

Chap. IX. *Helps how to manage Family-Worſhip, as to the manner of Performance.*

THUS at laſt I have diſpatch't the inſtructions that concern the matter of Family-Prayer, for the help of ſuch as are weak and are ſenſible of their own Inſufficiency; and have been longer than I intended, and muſt contract in the Reſt.

As to the due manner of managing this Solemn Family-Work, ſo much is writ by others concerning the neceſſary Eſſentials of all Prayer, that it's needleſs here to add any thing: what belongs to all Prayer, Publick, Family, Secret Prayer, you muſt be ſure it be Cordial, you muſt pray with the Spirit, and underſtanding alſo; your Family de-

1 Cor. 14. 15.

votion must not be a meer customary Formality, like the Papists Tongue-threshing, as *Luther* calls their Cantings: You must in-
Jer. 30. 21. gage your hearts in the work, and then draw nigh to him; You must also ask what is ac-
2 Sam. 7. 27. cording to God's will, ground Your prayers upon a Promise, as *David* did: and God re-
1 Joh. 5. 14, quires You must also prepare your heart and
15. then stretch out Your hand to God in pray-
Job 11. 13. er; Wash before You Worship; for if you
Psal. 26. 6. 66. 18. regard Iniquity God will not hear Your
Isa. 64. 7. prayer; You must stir up your selves to take hold of God; come in sincerity, with all Humility, with Importunity: You must propound right Ends in your prayers, not for self-credit to be seen of Men, as the *Pharisees*, nor for Worldly profit or to please a Friend, But for God's Glory and injoying Communion with him. But above all, see that you improve Christ as your Advocate, in all your addresses to God, without whom your best Sacrifices are rejected.

But I must not insist on these, but lay down some general Directions how to manage this Family-Altar, and the Sacrifice thereon.

1. Set Your Souls in God's presence: Re-
Psal. 16. 8. member who it is you have to deal with? not with men like your selves, but with the Infinite, Eternal, Incomprehensible Majesty of the great God: an Heart-searching, All-seeing
Hab. 1. 13. and Holy God, *that is of purer Eyes than to*
Psal. 11. 4, 7. *behold Evil, and cannot look on Iniquity; whose*
Job 13. 26, *Throne is in Heaven, who loveth Righteousness;*
bu

but an Hypocrite cannot come before him; work your hearts to an awe of his Divine Majesty: Consider of his Infinite perfections, and the great distance betwixt the Glorious God and silly Worms, yea betwixt the Holy God and your Sinful Souls; Remember God is a *Consuming Fire*, and you as *dryed stubble*, therefore serve him with Reverence and Godly Fear; give him the Glory due unto his Name, internally, externally, in your conceptions of him, affections to him, prostration before him; he is to be had in reverence of all that are round about him; It's more to appear before God than the Holiest men, or greatest Princes on Earth, regard not Auditors or joyners in Worship, so much as the object of Worship; Say as *Abraham* the friend of God, *Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes*; Oh that my Soul were weighted with the Glorious Majesty of God! Heb. 12. 28. 29. Psal. 29. 2. Psal. 89. 7. Gen. 11. 27.

2. Call in Divine assistance, presence and his Gracious Benidiction; the first thing you do stand up, and bespeak God's Blessing upon you in the present undertaking (except you find it convenient to begin with a *Psalm* to call the Family together,) and desire the Lord to unite your hearts unto him, and prevent distractions, and *Satans* Temptations, and vain Worldly cogitations in that Duty, and lift up your Souls to himself, with such an Ejaculation as that, *Let us lift up our hearts with our hands to God in the Heavens*; *look down from thy Holy Habitation, from* Psal. 86. 11. Lam. 3. 41. Deu. 26. 16.

Heaven and bless thy Servants! We are taking thy blessed Book into our Hands? *Lord open our Eyes to behold Wondrous things out of thy Law, let it be a light to our Feet, and a Lantharn to our Paths: let it be as our necessary Food, Yea sweeter than Honey or honey Comb:* more profitable than Thousands of Gold and Silver; help us to understand, apply, and Practise what we read: let our prayer be set before thee as Incense, *and the lifting up of our hands as an Evening Sacrifice: let thine Ear's be now attentive, and thine Eyes open—to hear the Prayer of thy Servants; to us belongeth shame and confusion of Face; — but to thee Lord our God belong Mercys, and Forgivnesses?* Thou hast Proclaimed thy name, *Gracious, Mercifull, Long-suffering,* &c. To this name of the Lord do we flee, pleading for Mercy, only for the sake of Christ; *look upon the face of thine anointed.*

Ps. 119. 18. Job 23. 12. Psal. 19. 10. Psal. 142. 2. Neh. 1. 6. Dan. 9. 8, 9. Exo. 34. 6. Psal. 18. 10. Psal. 84. 9.

3. Immediatly set upon this practice of erecting an Altar to the Lord: Embrace the first conviction; the Evening of that day when you have heard the Duty pressed on you, set about it; plead no excuse to put it off till a more convenient season; *Felix* losthis time and Soul by such a demur: set about it while your Spirits are warm: give not *Satan* advantage by delay: Imperatives have no future tense, present dispatch is Essential to Gods commands; anon, anon, at my leisure, is no Obedience; now or never; there's danger in delays; *I made haste,* saith *David, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.* Remember

Act. 24. 25. Ps. 119. 60.

member his holy Resolution in a weighty matter of the like nature, for settling God's Worship, *Psal.* 132. 23, 45. Your Spirits will cool by delays, *Satan* will get advantage; some have confessed that the Holy Spirit hath departed from them, upon their not yeelding to it's motions, and they have run into the dead Sea of Prophaneſs by degrees, if you miſs your opportunity you are undone: you may dye before Morning, if you go prayerleſs to Bed, & where will you be then? You have no leaſe of your Lives; you muſt not ſay to your Neighbour, *go, and come again and to Morrow I will give:* and will you ſay ſo to God? Oh do not put off God in paying his dues, either, as to firſt undertaking or after-performance: Take heed of delays, and make no intermiſſions; he that is not fit to day will be leſs fit to Morrow. Pro. 3. 28. *Qui non vult hodie cras minus apte erit.*

4. Excite your ſelves, and Families to the Work; it was the Practice of the Primitive Church, to have one to ſay before Prayer [*ſurſum corda*] up with your hearts; alas! our Spirits grow dull in the Intervals of Duty; you muſt ſtir up your ſelve to *take hold on God*: You muſt wind up your affections, and turn your Spirits as you would do the ſtrings of an Inſtrument; and you'll find they will quickly ſlip down again; twice did *David* ſay, *O God my heart is fixed*, yet immediately he found it unfix't again, and crys, *Awake Pſaltery and harp, I my ſelf will awake early*; You muſt be forced to give your hearts a pluck and check many times in a Duty, if Iſa. 64. 4. Pſa. 57.

you make conſcience to maintain them in a
1 Pet. 4 7. good frame: hence thoſe expreſſions of
Col. 4. 2. *Watching unto Prayer*, and *watching in Prayer*;
Mat. 26. 42. as well as *Watch* and *Pray*: Oh take heed of doing the work of the Lord negligently! ſerve not God with that which coſts you no-
Rom. 12. thing: But do your beſt in every Duty: *Be*
11. *you fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord*; Be in good earneſt, as if this were the laſt prayer you were to put up: Muſter up all your Forces, excite your Graces, rouze your Affections to and in the work, then you'll pray better and better.

5. Take a fit ſeaſon for Family-Worſhip; it's a great fault to put off Family-prayer till the laſt thing you do; it will not be ſo ſeaſonable to go down upon your knees, when you are fitter to ly down in your Beds: Our Lord ſaith of his ſleeping Diſciples, *the*
Mat. 26. 41. *Spirit indeed is willing but the Fleſh is weak*; but alas! ſome in your Families that have not a willing Spirit, and would rather be at reſt, than wreſtling with God; *Eutichus*
Act. 20, 9. might be a Godly man, yet being at an unſeaſonable hour, he dropt aſleep, which *Calvin* ſaith, might be in ſome ſort excuſable, for its no wonder, if having ſtruggl'd againſt ſleep, at ſuch an unſeaſonable time, at length he was overcome: he concludes he had not compos'd himſelf to ſleep, becauſe he choſe an unfit place to ſleep in; being in a Window, and it muſt be aſcribed more to natural Infirmity, than willful fault; but by this inſtance Governours muſt learn to take fit times for

Quid mirum ſi noctè intempeſtâ cum Somno luctatus tandem ſuccubuit?
Calv. in loc.

Family-

Family-Worſhip; not when Children and Servants are tired out with working; if it be attainable, go to prayers before Supper, when your Spirits are moſt brisk and lively; drowzy Devotion brings guilt on the perſon and Family, eſpecially if it be through imprudent Management; a fit time for Duty Morning and Evening, when the Family Comes together to their Stated Meals.

6. Let Family-Worſhip be performed when other Worldly buſineſs can be beſt laid aſide: *One thing is needfull*, take heed of incumbring your ſelves with the *many things* of the World: I hope I need not bid you order the members of your Family to lay hands off all other Works, but you muſt endeavour that (if poſſible) their hearts be alſo taken off all other Imployments, that they may *attend upon the Lord without diſtraction*; not that Governours can pretend to govern the inward man, but that they may ſo diſpatch and diſpoſe of Worldly concerns under their cognizance, as to leave both themſelves and Families, as little occaſion of diverſion, as may be; therefore muſt you take ſuch times for Religious Excerciſe, wherein you may be freeſt from buſineſs. *Solomon* ſaith, *Through deſire a man having ſeparated himſelf, ſeeketh and intermedleth with all Wiſdom*; Mans mind is but Finite, and cannot be intent on ſeveral things at once; you muſt mind Religion, in your Earthly buſineſs, but if you mingle Earthly buſineſs with your Religious Dutys, you marre all.

Luk. 10. 42.

1 Cor. 7. 35.

Pro. 18. 1.

7. Be

7. Be ſhort and ſerious: Be not ordinarily long, leſt you be judged tedious: Conſider the infirmities of Children, and ſome Family occaſions and conveniences: Weaklings of the Flock muſt not be over-driven, leſt they faint or tire in the way: Children and Servants have but a meaſure of affection, eſpecially if yet Carnal: They will ſoon be ready to ſay, *Behold, what a wearineſs is it*, and when will the Duty be over? Yea, and perhaps will fall aſleep, or ſeek Diverſions, or take occaſion to be abſent: Not but that 'tis their fault; but you may give them occaſion: Yet though you may be ſhort, you muſt be ſerious, run not over Duties curſorily, or in poſt haſt, as a task, and longing for a Period: You muſt be warm and lively: Our Lords Prayer was ſhort, but pithy, and full of affection; *O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me, nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt*: It is not length of ſpeaking, but ſtrength of affection that God looks at: Yet a longer Prayer is not unlawful, upon ſome ſpecial occaſion, or upon more than ordinary inlargement of affections: But what I now ſay, is in a ſtated courſe of Family Duty's: Be ſhort, Succinct, Diſtinct, Methodical, and Pathetical in your Devotions.

Mal. 1. 13. Amos 8. 5.

Mat. 26. 39.

8. Let not guilt ſtop your Mouths: If you have in the intervals of Duty, ſlipt into any Sin; Oh! Be ſure to get it off, before you wait on God in your Families: Retire into a corner, confeſs thy ſin, bewail it, act Faith on

on the Mediator for Pardon: Yea, ſuffer not guilt in thy Family, let not wickedneſs dwell in thy Tabernacles, for then thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot: If thou indulge ſin in thy ſelf, or in thy Family, Conſcience will ſtare in thy face, and weaken thy confidence in thy Approaches to God: Guilt had ſhut *Davids* Lips, till it was Pardoned, therefore he Prays, *O Lord open thou my Lips*: An unſuitable Carriage, provokes God to withdraw Aſſiſtance: Then what can you do? And as guilt ſtops your Mouths, ſo it opens the Mouths of others: They will be ready to ſay, it's no matter of your praying, except you practiſed better: Your Servants and Children will be ready to deſpiſe you, and withdraw from you, and ſo breed Confuſion in your Family, which will hinder Prayer: But if your Lives ſpeak for God, as well as your Lips, you may ſay as *David*, *So ſhall I have to anſwer him that Reproacheth me, for I truſt in thy Word.* Then you may hope he will not take the word of Truth out of your Mouth: Let there be a ſweet Harmony betwixt your Profeſſions, Prayers and Practices, and then God will hear you, Men will own you, and your own Conſciences will witneſs for you:

Job 11. 14, 15.

Pſal. 51. 15.

Pſal. 119. 42. v. 43.

9. Familiarize Holy Diſcourſes with your Families, and put the Members thereof upon Secret Duties: If your Relations never hear a word of God, or Religion in intervals of Family Exerciſe, that Duty will be ſtrange to them, and they will but judge it

as

as a formal round, and your ſelves will have leſs Heart to the work: If God be not in your thoughts all the day, you will but coldly Pray at Night, nay, it's well if you be not like thoſe wicked Men, that through the Pride of their Countenance, will not ſeek after God: Why ſo? The Text ſaith, *God is not in all his thoughts*, or (as it is in the Margent) all his thoughts are, *there is no God*: *Wicked*, here is a Collective word, for he ſpeaks not only of one perſon, but indefinitely of all (ſaith a good Interpreter) for ſuch is the Nature of Man, when he is Deſtitute of God to govern him: And if God be not in your thoughts, he will not be in your words, for *out of the abundance of the Heart, the Mouth ſpeaketh*: And who will believe you are in earneſt, when your Lips are ſealed up in Silence, tell your Wife, Children, Servants, at due ſeaſons, of the preciouſneſs of Souls, the neceſſity of grace, excellency of Chriſt, the Concernment of Eternity, the near approach of Death, the great account of Judgment, and the importance of Watching, Praying: And put them upon going alone by themſelves, and praying as well as they can: And as ſuch Diſcourſe will familiarize theſe Solemn Truth and Duties to them, ſo it will make them willing to joyn with you in Family Worſhip: If you will not own God before your Relations, ſure you will not own him before Enemies: *Gordius* the Martyr, being perſwaded to keep his Heart to himſelf, Oh! no, ſaith he, it is fit that this

Pſal. 10.4. *Impius hoc loco nomen collectivum eſt, nique enim de una tantum perſona loquitur, ſed indifinite de omnibus: Talis eſt hominum natura quando deſtituitur gubernatore Deo Moller in hoc.*

this Mouth of mine, which was made by God, and for God, ſhould ſpeak of God, and for God: Oh! Friends, will you take your leave of God, in the Morning or Evening Sacrifice, and never own him, till the return of that Family Service? God forbid: Are not the Souls of yours committed to you? Muſt you not give an account of them? And is not faithful ſpeaking to them for God, one way of diſcharging truſt; profeſs your Subjection to the Goſpel, and your example may prevail on all about you, for God is much glorified thereby. 2 Cor. 9. 13.

10. Obſerve anſwers of Prayers, and gather up Experiences: As this will furniſh you with matter of Prayer, ſo it will help you in the due manner of managing it: How did the Lord aſſiſt my Heart in ſuch a Duty? What quickenings? What meltings? What Communion with God? What further degrees or ſtrength of grace, got I in ſuch a performance? What power againſt ſuch a Corruption? What ſtrength againſt Temptation? What further Ability or Incouragement in and for Gods Service? Or make your remarks upon your Family, what perſon is informed, reformed, conformed, to the ways of God? What Convictions or Impreſſions have I obſerved, on the Spirit of ſuch a Child or Servant? What Miſcarriages to be reproved or bewailed? What evils have been prevented or removed? How the Lord hath bleſſed or proſpered your undertakings? That God may have the glory,

your

your ſelves may have the uſe or profit of what you have met with in your Families: *David* ſaith, *I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak, for he will ſpeak peace unto his People, and to his Saints: In the Morning I will direct my Prayer unto thee, and will look up*, the words are very Emphatical, Firſt, his great care and exactneſs ſo to Order, Direct and Compoſe, both his Perſon and Prayers in ſuch a manner, as to be well pleaſing to God, *Then will I ſtand as a Watchman, upon my Watch-Tower, to conſider what anſwer he will give me*: The Altar which I have made, ſhall be my Watch-Tower, alſo on which I will ſtand to expect ſome bleſſed Anſwer: What help the Lord will afford me: By this means you may ſuit the condition of your Family, and not ſhoot at Rovers: But always find matter, from things daily occurring, to preſent before the Lord; yea, and thoſe very occurrences, will excite ſuitable affections of Joy and Sorrow, to quicken you in Prayers or Praiſes: This is what *Solomon* preſcribes in Prov. 27. 23. *Be thou diligent to know the State of thy Flocks, and look well to thy Herds*: Whether it refer to a literal Inſpection of Shepherds, in a proper Senſe; or Metaphorical; in a Political as Magiſtrates; Eccleſiaſtical as Miniſters, or Oeconomical as Governors of Families: It's a great Duty in all reſpects, [*eſt præceptum œconomicum*, ſaith *Mercer*] it properly and principally belongs to Houſe-holders: Elſe how can you accommodate your Counſels, Admo-

Pſ. 8; 8.
Pſ. 5. 3.

אֶעֶרֶךְ לָךְ *Diſponam tibi* וְאֶצְטֶה *eſt ſpeculabor inſtar ſpeculatoris obſervaturus an venias mihi auxilio.*

Admonitions of them, or Petitions for them, or your Sympathy or Compaſſion with them? Thus I have diſpatcht my Inſtructions, both Preparatory for erecting this Family Altar, and alſo directed in the due manner of managing this Family Worſhip, both for matter and manner:

And now you cannot plead Ignorance or Imbecillity, I have in my weak Capacity reacht out my Hand to help you, your way is lined out, yea, ſome have written down words, and forms of Prayer to aſſiſt you, and you have godly Miniſters, to whom you may repair for further direction, and if ſtill you wilfully live in the neglect of this known Duty, your Blood be upon your own Heads, yea, the Blood of your Families, will alſo be required at your Hands: God Almighty make you willing and able for the Diſcharge of your relative Duty: But if after all this, you will not ſpeak a word to God, for your Poor, Languiſhing, Gaſping, Dying Families, to keep them out of Hell, I leave you to that Juſtice, which will ſhortly plead with you at another rate, than we poor Miniſters can do, and will take vengance on you, for your willful neglect, and Diſobedience to the Calls of God:

CHAP.

Chap. 10. *A Resolution of several Cases of Conscience, concerning the Worship of God in Families.*

MY last work, is the Answering of Sundry Cases of Conscience, some whereof have been propounded to me, others are ordinarily incident in this point, concerning this Family-Altar, and Sacrifices in Families.

1. Query, *Whether may an House-Holder take upon him to Preach, expound Scripture, dispense the Seals of the Covenant, as Baptism, and the Lords Supper to the Members of his Family, seeing he is a Priest?*

Answ. 1. Ministerial Authoritative teaching by vertue of others is one thing, and charitative subservient teaching is another: A Master of a Family, must teach all under his Charge as a Master, yet not usurp the Office of a Minister, without a just due Call: His teaching must not be in opposition, but in subordination to Ministerial Instruction: As Families are Subordinate to Churches:

Deut. 11. 18, 19, 20, 21. Heb. 5. 4.

2. Masters of Families must not take upon them that they are not fit for, or presume beyond their Capacity, incurring the guilt of proud self-conceitedness, or vain ostentation, as to undertake to interpret the Original, or give the Sense of dark Prophecy, or obscure Scriptures, or determine knotty Controversies: Yet may declare (when it lies in their way) what they have read or heard

heard from Learned Pious Men, or got in publick Preaching.

3. Yet it is safest, ordinarily to pass by those abstruse and difficult points, and insist upon plain, practical, fundamental, catechistical Truths, or take occasion from the Chapter read in the Family, to infer such a seasonable word, suppose of admonition; (as I have heard a godly Father say) this is for you, look to't, this aims at you in such a case, and with serious Exhortations press it home upon Conscience: Or inform the ignorant in such or such a point, requiring them to remember it.

4. But as for administring Baptism and the Lords Supper, they may not presume to do it, being an act of Office: This being annexed to Christs Commission, *Teach and Baptize*, and this is the *Cup of Blessing*, which we [viz. *as Ministers*] *bless*: And this they receive of the Lord; and are to deliver it to the People: And I find several Judicious Divines affirming, that Dispensing the Seals, is peculiar to an Organized Church, and is proper only to Ministers rightly Ordained: For the Lords Supper is a Symbol, and mean of publick Communion; not of Families as such: For though Christ administred it to his Family, yet not as a Family, but as a Church: The Judgment and Practice of the Primitive Doctors and Christians, is a sufficient proof of this.

Mat. 28. 19, 20. 1 Cor. 10. 16. 1 Cor. 11. 23.

2. Query, *Is the Master or Governour of the Family, always bound to perform Family Duty?*

May he not in some cases, Substitute another to perform that Office for him?

Answ. 1. It is incumbent upon the governour of a Family, as his proper charge: And it is the fittest he do it himself, if capable: *David* was a great King, and had much business abroad, yet returned to *bless his House*, and put it not off to a Chaplain: *Job* was the greatest of all the Men in the *East*, yet he acted personally in Family Worship: I have heard of a Noble Man in *England*, that though he keep a Chaplain, yet to shew his Authority and Duty voluntarily at some times himself prays with his Family: This is well done:

2 Sam. 6. 20. Job 1. 35.

2. Yet a Chaplain may be made use of, especially where the Family is numerous, or when his gifts and graces are more taking and edifying, and he is likely to do more good than the Governour: It may seem probable, that some *Levites* were kept in some of the *Jews* Families, being oft reckoned with their Sons, Daughters, Servants, it may be in some Cases to perform these Religious Duties in the Family: And so Idolatrous *Micah*, had his *Levite*-Chaplain: which he too much boasted of:

Deut. 12. 12, 18. Judg. 17. 13.

3. Some have thought, that a Wife in a Family, may in some Cases perform Family-Duty, and that this Honour may be given to the weaker vessel, to do the Office of Religious Exercise, as well as partake in the Government of the Family: doubtless she is to pray: And it hath been judged by Learned

1 Pet. 3 7.

ed men that she may and must pray in the family with her husbands leave, and in her husbands presence, so she cover her face with a Vail, in token of her subjection: This they think is meant by a woman praying or prophecying with her head covered, not in the church where she was not to speak, but in the family when she performed that peice of worship, and *Calvin* seems to incline to this apprehension, saying, the *Apostle* requires this modesty of women, not only in the place where the Church meets together, but in any grave assembly of Matrons, or such as sometimes are in private houses: It's true he denys them liberty to prophecy in any other place, but I see no reason why an *Abigail*, *a Deborah*, may not at least be the mouth of a family to God. But I am not positive herein, but leave it to others consideration.

1 Tim. 2. 12. 1 Cor, 14. 34. *Quanquam nec hoc malè quadrabit, si dicamus Apostolum hanc modestiam non modò in loco ubi tota Ecclesia congregatur, requirere a mulieribus: sed etiam in quovis gravi ore cœtu aut matronarum aut virorum: Qualis interdum in privatas ædes conveniunt: Calv. in locum:*

4. And why may not a Servant, a Steward of the house, such as *Eliezer*, *Abrahams* Servant, or *Obadiah*, *Ahabs* Servant, pray in the Family? Especially in these cases, when the Master gives him, not only liberty, but a call to that Performance, yea requests him to pray in the Family. 2. When that Servant hath gifts to qualifie him for such a work, and is not exposed to the scorn and contempt of his fellows. 3. In case of the Masters sickness or absence from home, or when more publick necessary business diverts him. 4. In case that Servant be Humble

ble, Submiſſive, Self-denying, and know his place, and do it not with a kind of Bravado, over his Fellow-Servants, or Contempt of his Maſter: And if in all things, that Servant *ſhew himſelf Obedient, according to his Duty*: 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 2. 18, 19.

3. Query, *Or caſe of Conſcience is, When is the fitteſt time for the performance of Family-Worſhip?*

Anſw. As to the time of Prayer: I am really aſhamed, when I read how often the *Turks* and *Mehometans* Pray; it is ſaid by Writers, they go ſeven times a Day to their Devotion, *viz.* 1. [*Diluculo*] Early in the Morning: 2. [*Oriente Sole*] at Sun-riſing: 3. [*Meridie*] at Noon: 4. [*Inter Meridiem & Veſperam*] betwixt Noon and Even: 5. [*Occidente Sole*] at Sun-ſet. 6. [*In Veſpere*] an hour after Sun-ſet. 7. [*Mediâ nocte*] at Midnight: Oh! Be aſhamed, you profeſſed Chriſtians, to be out-ſtript by the Barbarous *Turks*:

* But as for the *Jews*, whom primitive Chriſtians imitated, their hours of Prayer were borrowed from the times of their Sacrificing, 1. Morning, which was any time before the third hour, *Acts* 2. 15. 2. Their Mid-day, called the ſixth hour, *Acts* 10. 9. or about Noon: † 3. Evening-Prayer, which was about the ninth hour, which was ſix a Clock at Night: *Act.* 3. 1. *Calvin* thinks they did not go into the Temple to Pray, meerly to comply with *Jewiſh* Rites, but the better to propagate the Goſpel; yet aſſerts, that the Church cannot want

* *Weems Chriſtian Synag.* p. 85. *David ibrict.* Pſal. 55. 17. Dan. 6. 10.

† *Inde colligimus non poſſe carere Eccleſiam certâ diſciplinâ, ac hodie niſi obſervet nimius torpor utile eſſet quotidie habere tales Conventus: Calvin Act.* 3. 1.

want her certain Diſciplin, and at this Day, ſaith he, but that too much drowzineſs hinders, it were profitable to have daily ſuch meetings for Prayer: He means, in a more publick manner: But for the Circumſtance of time, it is judged, that Morning and Evening are fitteſt ſeaſons for Family-Devotion: Hence *Calvin* notes [*Hoc exercitio docebantur, ab invocatione & cultu dei incipere diem & claudere*] by this exerciſe, they were taught to begin and ſhut up the Day with Prayer, and the Worſhip of God: I have hinted this before, and ſhall only add in ſhort a few Directions.

1. You muſt be ſure to Pray for a Bleſſing upon your Meat at Meals, according to, 1 *Tim.* 4. 4. 5.

2. Take your Family at Meal-time to ſeek God, and read his Scriptures, to ſing Gods praiſe, and to perform Family-Duty; Morning and Evening:

3. Let it be a ſtated time, if poſſible, known to the Family, that none may plead excuſe for their abſence: But the whole Family may attend:

4. Yet if ſome extraordinary accident intervene, you muſt not think your ſelves ſo preciſely bound to a time, as to be perplexed in Conſcience for Omiſſion, but take another more convenient, which may more directly ſuit your occaſions:

4. Caſe, *Suppoſe the occaſions of an Houſeholder, call him abroad about his lawful occaſions, before the reſt of his Family can riſe out of*

their Beds, may he omit Family-Duty?

Answ. 1. In such a Case, he must go to Prayer with such of his Family as are risen; as it's likely some are, to help him away:

2. However, he must pray alone, committing himself and his Family into Gods hands, which the Lord may graciously accept:

3. He must double his Diligence at his return, or at another time: And mourn for what he cannot mend: A good Heart will lament any providential hindrance of Communion with God.

4. But if possible, so cast your Worldly concerns, as not to hinder your Family Exercise, prudent foresight may do much to fore-
Ex. 16. 22. cast for it: But if your Calling be such, as that cannot be, do as the *Israelites* did, gather double the Day or Night before, *two omers* for a Man or Family, lay in for the Day following, what may stand you in stead by pleading with God, for what yow'll need:

5. Case, *What gesture is to be used in Family-Prayer, whether sitting be lawful?*

Answ. Scripture tells us of several gestures in Prayer, as

Luk. 18. 13. 1. Standing, Mark 11. 25. *When ye stand Praying, forgive:* The *Publican stood afar off, smote upon his Breast*, yet a Penitent Praying posture:

John 17. 1. 2. The Eyes fixed upwards, *Jesus lift up his Eyes to Heaven*, as we look a Man in the face, when we speak to him: Or in some Cases, the Eye may be shut, to prevent gazing or distraction:

3. Some-

3. Sometimes proſtration, or laying the Body on the Earth, hath been a Praying geſture, Abraham *bowed himſelf toward the ground*, but Joſhua *fell to the Earth upon his Face*: Our Lord alſo *fell on his face and Prayed*: Gen. 18. 2. Joſh 7.6. Mat. 26. 39.

4. But the moſt ordinary geſture is kneeling, called bowing the knee: Even King *Solomon, kneeled down upon his knees, and ſpread forth his hands*: Our dear Lord alſo (whoſe Example is our Rule) *kneeled down and Prayed*: Methinks we ſhould not be too ſtiff to kneel before the Lord our Maker, before whom every knee muſt bow, either in Devotion, or Deſtruction. Eph. 3. 14. 2 Chron 6. 12, 13. Luk. 22. 41. Pſal. 95. 5. Phi. 2. 10.

All agree. 1. That the geſture ſhould be reverent before the great God: 2 That bodily geſture ſhould be ſuch as doth beſt expreſs the inward reverence of the Heart: 3. That the geſture be ſuch as doth moſt quicken the Heart, and help on in the Duty: 4. That it be ſuch as gives a good example to others: *Cum quis quæris orare collocat membra ſicut ei occurrit. Aug. De orat.*

As for ſitting in Prayer, it's an unbecoming lazy geſture, eſpecially if choſen, and in the beginning of a Duty: Indeed for weak Bodies tyred out with other geſtures, ſome excuſe may be made, but ordinarily it's not allowable:

Object. *But is it not ſaid of* David, he went in and ſate before the Lord, 2 Sam. 7. 18. *yet he Prayed.*

Anſw. 1. Some ſay, *David* was a King, and therefore might ſit, according to the *Jews* Rule, *it's not lawful for any to Pray ſitting before the Lord, but the King*:

2. Others say, the King *Sate in Dust and Ashes*, in an humble posture, *he fell on his face*, say others:

3. This was more a Meditation, than a Prayer, admiring the goodness of God: Or he might first sit, and then kneel:

Manſit יָשַׁב *reſtitit: Plus animo quam corpore ſedit quintus coram Domino. Cajet.*

4. But indeed the word *sitting*, signifies *Davids* constancy in Meditating, Praying; for a Man usually continues longer sitting, than standing: *David* sate, *i.e.* continued longer, and more familiarly before the Lord, and with him, than ordinary: It refers more to the Composedness of his Mind, than to the posture of his Body: Therefore let not this Text, patronize that sleepy gesture:

6. Case is, *What place must we choose, or how must we use our Voice in Family-Prayer:*

Answ. 1. We are not bound to Consecrated places for Family-Duty: In this you may use your liberty: In Gospel-times, God stands not so much upon the place of Worship, as the quality of Worshippers, and manner of Worshipping: Look at the frame of your Hearts, as before described, and fear not Entertainment, where ever you be.

Joh. 4 23, 24.
1 Tim. 2.8.

2. Yet the Circumstance of place may be duely weighed, if you live amongst Lions, Mockers, Scorners of Religon, though you must maintain your profession of God's name in your Families, as *Daniel did*, yet it's a disputable point, whether you may not sometimes retire from open violence into some private place. But there may be a greater reason for retirement than that, *viz.* To avoid

void the ſuſpicion of Hypocriſy, and Vain-glory which was the *Phariſees* great fall; or you may withdraw into ſome diſtant place from the ſtreet, to avoid diſturbance by hurrys, Tumults and Confuſions that may diſtract you. Mat. 6. 5.

3. But let the place be ſo known to the Family as all may repair to it, as an Exchange, at the time of prayer, be it dwelling-houſe, parlour, Chamber; as *Daniel* improved ſome convenient room, called a *Chamber* for his Family-Devotion, So may You. Dan. 6. 10.

4. For voice, it's true God is an all-ſeeing Spirit, and men may ſpeak to God, when they ſpeak not a word, as *Moſes*, *Hanna*, *Nehemiah*; prayer is the motion of the will to God, but in Family-prayer 'tis otherwiſe, men have Bodies and Tongues and Ears, and cannot underſtand others conceptions without a vocal articulate ſound; what you pray muſt be audible, elſe they cannot joyn with you, or be edified by you: only ſee your Hearts go along with your Lips; and Remember the ſaying of Solomon, *The words of Wiſe-Men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among Fools*; Eccl. 9. 17. I know it referrs to Wiſe Counſels, not prayers, but ſome may pray more affectionatly with a low Voice, than others with loud clamours: Yea poſſibly you may command your thoughts better in the former, than latter; ſee you be ſerious, and your voice Audible and Intelligible, not Mumbling your Prayers,

prayers, ſo that your Family cannot underſtand you or know what you mean.

7. Caſe is, *Whether is a form of Prayer Lawfull, or whether may an Houſe-holder uſe a Form of Prayer, or may others joyn with him in the uſe thereof?*

Anſw. 1. Our moſt ſolid judicious Divines of thoſe called Puritans, do not judg forms of Prayer abſolutly unlawfull; Dr. *Preſton* ſaith, "I think there is none here "that doubt of it, but that a Set Form of "Prayer may be uſed; you know, Chriſt pre-"ſcribed a Form, — there were certain "*Pſalmes* that were Prayers uſed con-"ſtantly, — ſtill in all times the Church had "Set-Forms; I know no objection againſt "it of weight, &c. Mr. *Hilderſham*, (the "Oracle of his time) ſaith, I dare not deny "but a weak Chriſtian may uſe the help of "a good Prayer-Book in this Caſe; better "to pray on a Book than not to pray at all; "certainly it is the Spirit of Errour that "hath taught the World otherwiſe.

Dr. Preſton *Saints daily Exerciſe*, p. 80,81,82.

Hilderſham on Pſal. 51. Lect. 12. p. 63. Sec 3. Arg. for forms.

2. "Yet theſe worthy men affirm truely "that every Chriſtian, even the meaneſt and "weakeſt hath the gift and Spirit of Pray-"er; So ſaith the latter of theſe Worthys, "and muſt not *neglect the gift that's in him*; "Dr. *Preſton* ſaith, there is no man that hath "any work of Grace in his heart, but he is "enabled in ſome meaſure to pray, without "a ſet Form of prayer; there was never any "man in any extream want, but he knew "how to expreſs himſelf, where he had "liberty to ſpeak.

1 Tim. 4. 14.

3. But

3. But Yet considering that some Christians (though truely Gracious) may for a season be very raw, and unfit to open their Cases to God methodically, or in apt words, and considering it's before a Family that a man is to be the Mouth of, and considering that unmeet and undigested expressions expose an Ordinance of God to contempt; I could advise some Christians, before they pray with others, to premeditate, and duly weigh what they are to say to God and think of a proper method, and some Scriptural expressions, to produce them in Prayer, as I have before directed:

4. As I doubt not the lawfulness of a member in a Family joyning with such a Prayer, if the matter be sound and Orthodox, so I question but such a Master as Conscientiously useth this practice, will so increase in gifts and abilities, that in due time, he will cast away those Crutches, and learn to go on profitably in daily Family Exercise, to the edification of all that joyn with him: So that in the diligent and humble use of these means, many nauseous Tautologies, and needless Impertinencies will be paired off, which offended intelligent ears: The Worthy Dr. *Preston* saith, "a Child that cannot go, may have a "prop to help it; but we must not always "be Children, we must not always use that help:

8. Case is, *What if the Housholder or Governour be loose and careless, possibly comes home full of Drink, yet will Pray, though in no fit case for it, or he*

he is unsound at heart, Prays but coldly, formally, may I joyn?

Answ. 1. Thy acceptance with God, depends not on the state of him that Prays, nor on his zeal, but upon thy non-acting of Faith in Christ, if thou be upright in joyning with the words, and endeavourest to lift up thy Heart to God, the Lord may graciously entertain thee, though the person praying may be Rejected: For *every one shall bear his own burden*, and *give an account of himself to God*; Not of others that we joyn with:

Gal. 6. 5. Rom. 14. 12.

2. Yet if thou beest certainly assured that the party Praying speaks Nonsense or Blasphemy, in stead of Praying, thou art bound in Conscience to shew thy dislike of it, lest God be Dishonoured, and Offended with the whole Family, the Man hardned in sin, thy own Conscience defiled, and thy self in danger of playing the Hypocrite, in pretending to joyn with what thy Soul abhors: In this case thou must withdraw, and get alone, and mourn for it:

2 Kin. 5. 13. 1 Sam. 25. 37.

3. And 'tis also thy Duty, humbly and modestly to take a fit season to speak to thy Master, as *Naamans* Servants did to him, when they saw him out, and you know it did good: And *Abigail* told her Husband *Nabal* of his fault and danger, and *his heart dyed within him*: who can tell what good such a word in season may do? He may think of it afterwards,

1 Sam. 19. 4, 6.

Jonathans Preaching *Davids* Case, with his Passionate Father *Saul*, did good for a while: If you come to a Father or Master humbly and

and ſubmiſſively, not ſaucily and malapartly, you may win upon them, and if you can ſay little, yet if you burſt out into tears for their ſin, it may prove as convincing Rhetorick to them as King *Edward*'s weeping was to Biſhop *Cranmer* and *Ridley*, denying his Siſter *Mary* liberty for Maſs; who ſaid, *The King had more Divinity in his little finger than they had in their whole body.*

4. If ſtill there be no Remedy or Reformation, tho' thou muſt not with curſed *Cham*, diſcover thy Fathers or Maſters nakedneſs, if otherwiſe it may be helpt, yet thou may'ſt or muſt acquaint a godly Miniſter, or Chriſtian friend, ask their advice, and (if that be judged expedient) that they may ſpeak to thy Father, or Maſter, with as much ſecreſie as poſſible, and this runs parallel to our Lord's Rule, *Mat.*18.15,16. Who knows but a conviction may faſten? and if he be obſtinate, he will leave off his praying in a little time; for his ſinning will make him give over praying, or his praying his ſinning.

9 Caſe. *Suppoſe I be caſt into a graceleſs and prayerleſs family, how muſt I do, or what is my duty?*

*A.*1. Examine thy grounds and ends in coming thither; conſider thy Call, if thy Parents fixed thee there as an Apprentice, quiet thy ſelf in God's diſpoſe; make good uſe of this Providence; if thou came thither voluntarily, without due conſideration, be humbled for ſin, beg pardon, make ſure of a friend above.

2. Uſe all lawful means to remove into a more

more wholesom Air; I say to thee as the
2 Cor. 7. 21. Apostle to a godly Servant, *Art thou called, being a Servant, care not for it; but if thou may'st be made free, use it rather.* Methinks God saith
Numb. 16. 21, 24, 26, 31. to you as once to *Israel*, *Depart, I pray you, from the Tents of these wicked men.* It's a wonder the ground doth not cleave in sunder, or some Judgment comes not down upon such prayerless Families.

3. Humbly propound some Expedients for Remedy: See if any other Member in the Family will undertake that work, or whether the Governour will give you leave to pray in the Family; and behave your selves so holily and winningly, that the good conceit of Superiours or Equals may be a prologue and preparative to that work.

4. If all this avail not for Family-worship, and necessity detains you there, as you love your Souls, spend more time, take more pains in secret; [*Abi in Cellam & dic, miserere mei*] get into your Cell, and say, Lord have mercy on me, as the
Jer. 13. 17. old Monk said to *Luther*; or as *Jeremiah*, *If ye will not hear it, my Soul shall weep in secret places for your Pride.* Pray for your own Soul, that you may not perish with others; pray for the Family, and all the Members thereof, Governours and Governed; be not discourraged with their scoffs; who knows what the Event may prove?

10 Case. *What if I be cast into a praying-family, what use shall I make thereof?*

Ans. 1. Give glory to God: admire his wise and gracious Providence: It's not the Lot of all young people: Think and say, Lord, who am I to enjoy this Priviledge?
Judg. 6. 37. Gen. 28. 17. this is a blessed place, a place of blessings: This Fleece is wet with Dew, when others are dry: This is none other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven: Blessed be God that hath cast my Lot here.

2. Joyn in family-prayer: Be not needlesly absent; but do not content your selves with bodily presence, or postures, but see to it, that your hearts also joyn with the expressions, else you play the Hypocrites: And when you go forth, and set up Families of your own, use the same practice, but with the same spirit of your pious Masters.

3. Improve this stock of your Relation's prayers. A Father

ther may lay up an Estate for his Child in Bills and Bonds, which may prove a good Portion. The Corn sown in the Field, is as good as that in the Garner, in some respects better: The Father sows, the Child reaps a blessed Crop: God forbid that I should lose my Child's Portion for want of looking after it: Lord cut not off the Entail of my Fathers Covenant: Oh hear the many cryes he put up for me in my hearing!

4. Behave your selves suitably to that Family where so gracious a Providence hath cast you: God forbid you should be a scoffing *Ishmael* in an *Abraham*'s house, a prophane *Esau* in *Jacob*'s, a Rebellious *Absalom*, or a filthy *Ammon* in holy *David*'s Family: You disgrace the ways of God more than others, when it shall be said, See what a Beast was bred in a praying-family: You greatly discredit your Breeding, and sink your selves deeper in Hell: God Almighty open your Eyes, awake your Consciences, and reform your Conversation; that you may walk worthy of God to all well pleasing.

I have now done with this great Subject of a due Erecting a Family-Altar, and offering Gospel Sacrifices to the Lord; and oh that there were of these Altars set up in every dwelling-house, and Divine Incense ascending like *Pillars of Smoke* Heaven wards. Cant. 3.6.

I have but a word of Incouragement to weak, but willing Souls, that set upon Family-worship, but meet with so many discouragements from without, but especially within, that their hearts are apalled, and are ready to give back, and say, Will God accept such poor, lean, and lank Sacrifices, so dead, heartless, lifeless? I do no good, I get no good, I might as well give over, I am oft so wofully indisposed for duty, that I might as well let it alone.

O my Friends! look on this as a temptation, and beware of it; strive against it, rouze up your spirits.

1. Consider, you are not the first or only persons that Satan hath resisted in duty; for even *Joshua* the High-Priest (a Type of Christ) had Satan standing at his right hand, to resist him; and he had too much advantage against him; for, *he was cloathed with filthy garments*: And our weakness is Satan's strength, our guilt his advantage: But our *Jehovah* saith, *The Lord rebuke thee*: The Devil makes spots, and then accuseth us of our spots; but Christ wipes them off. Zech. 3.1, 2. 2 Cor. 2.11.

2. Our

2. Our Lord takes well your good will to do, though you can do but little: The *Imprimis* of a willing mind is accepted, though your following *Items* be few and poor: *The Lord is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love; i. e.* those duties we perform to the Lord with labour and hard struggling. It's the observation of precious Mr. *Hildersham*; *Think not*, saith he *(Beloved) that those prayers only are pleasing to God, wherein we please our selves best, or which we perform with most facility and aptness of mind and speech; no, no, when we can perform this duty in obedience to God, even against our own disposition, and oppositions in our own hearts; those are the prayers that are most acceptable to God; as* Abraham's *Obedience*, Gen. 22. 12.

2 Cor. 8. 12. Heb. 6. 10. On Psal. 51. p. 65.

3. By using and exercising little grace, improving small ability to pray, you will encrease it, and will more comfortably carry on the work; so the Text; *To every one that hath* (i. e. by employing it, he shews that he hath, for otherwise the unprofitable Servant had a Talent also) *shall be given, and he shall have abundance.* Sick persons, whose appetite is weakned, by eating provoke and recover them, one morsel drawing down another: You'll find this true in spirituals.

Mat. 25. 29.

4. The weaker you think your selves, and the more likely to depend on the right means of your acceptance, that is the Spirit of Christ for assistance, and the Merit and Intercession of Christ for entertainment: For alas! you find you have no flush of gifts to fill the Sails, or height of enlargement to carry with full gale to God; you are emptied, and your Plumes quite fallen as to any thing you do, and therefore conclude, you are too low to reach God, and your duties quite lost, except your persons and performances be found in Christ. I shall therefore conclude this whole Discourse with that sweet Text, that's worth a world, without the benefit of which, all our Altars and Sacrifices are Ciphers, *Rev.* 8. 3. *And another Angel came and stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer, and there was given unto him much Incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints, upon the golden Altar, which was before the Throne.*

Phil. 3. 9.

FINIS.